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THE ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

Written in *FRENCH* by

M. DU BOSCQ,

A

FRANCISCAN, COUNSELLOR and PREACHER in ordinary to THE KING

In the Year MDCXXX.

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THE ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

CHAP. I.

Of SELF-CONCEIT, *and* SELF-LOVE.

AFFECTION commonly follows eſteem, and the love we have for any object ſeems to ariſe from the knowledge we have of it; ſo that the love of ourſelves depends upon the opinion we conceive of our own merit, and the one is ſo cloſely connected with the other, that I am obliged to treat of them together, in order to ſhew how very rarely the knowledge and love of ourſelves are found together. The underſtanding in this

reſpect errs before the will, and the exceſſive love that many have for themſelves is merely owing to their ignorance; if they knew themſelves as they ought, they would be aſhamed of ſuch partial love; there is ſcarce any point in morality of greater concernment to women than this; for provided they are not miſtaken in the ſentiment they ought to have for their own perſons, they would ſeldom err in that which they ought to have for others.

The knowledge of themſelves would render them more virtuous and better ſatisfied; it is their whole defence as well as ornament. They ſay *Pallas* * had a mirrour for her ſhield, the looking upon which was a ſufficient defence to her againſt her enemies. And indeed, there can be no better defence either againſt calumny or flattery than the true knowledge of ourſelves; it is the eaſieſt way of reſiſting thoſe that either blame or praiſe us for what we are not; it is the way to become invincible, either to injurious ſlander or unjuſt commendation: But to make this matter plainer, I ſhall firſt ſhew wherein conſiſts whatever is uſeful and commendable in the good opinion we entertain of ourſelves, and wherein the ſame may prove dangerous and of bad conſequence, particularly to the fair ſex.

Since love depends upon knowledge, and knowledge upon the object in queſtion, why may we not be allowed, in conſequence of our

* Hom. Odyſſ. lib. x. ver. 297.

knowing

knowing the good we have, to love it? Why on this account we ſhould be thought guilty of arrogance, I cannot conceive: For where is the danger of ſaying that God hath given us a good diſpoſition, when it hath pleaſed him ſo to do, any more than in ſaying, ſuch a diſpoſition, be it what it will, is his gift?

And why may we not be allowed to ſee what is good in our ſoul by means of ſelf-knowledge, as to obſerve the good features in a face by means of a mirrour? Would it be humility to ſay white is black; or that we are ſick when we are well? Muſt we view ourſelves in all other reſpects but that wherein we have ſome excellence, or conſider ourſelves only with regard to our blemiſhes? Thus to fix our view upon our imperfections only, is to do as the flies that ſettle not upon glaſs, but on ſomething that is more rough and unpoliſhed; this is not to know ourſelves, but to be ignorant of our better part.

If there be any merit in us, it is blindneſs not to ſee it; and if we ſee it, it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge it. We muſt not, to ſhun vanity, incur the charge of ingratitude, and by flying from one fault run into another. There are ways of uniting truth with humility, and practiſing both theſe virtues together. To avoid the imputation of vanity we need only confeſs our dependence; there can be no harm in ſaying, it hath pleaſed God to beſtow ſuch or ſuch a favour upon us; this is rather to de-

clare our happineſs than to boaſt our deſerts; we may affirm that Heaven hath been kind to us, without ſaying that it is no more than what is due to our merit.

Ariſtotle will not allow the virtuous man to love himſelf, but the virtuous may †; "*because*, ſays he, *it would be againſt the order* "*of things, for the guilty to love in themſelves* "*that which deſerves hatred, and the innocent* "*to hate that in themſelves which is worthy of* "*Love. It is neceſſary*, he adds, *that they who* "*have imperfections ſhould ſee them, in order to* "*correct and amend them, and that they who* "*have any natural advantages ſhould likewiſe* "*know it, in order to improve them by due cul-* "*tivation.*" The knowledge we have of any good is apt to give us courage, and to animate us to ſomething ſtill better; as they who have a good voice ſing where there is an echo, with a better grace, becauſe the plauſive ſound makes them more ſprightly; ſo when we conſider any good action that we have done, the joy we receive therefrom inſpires us with an ambition to do ſomewhat more; ſo that a good opinion of ourſelves raiſes and encourages us to advance in goodneſs, whereas a contrary opinion ſerves only to diſcourage and ſlacken our endeavours.

I am not ſpeaking of that high opinion which ſome women have of themſelves, and which

† Ethic. lib. IX. cap. 8. On ſelf-love. Moral. lib. 2. cap. 14.

makes

makes them ſeem rather impudent than bold, but of that opinion only which modeſty permits and humility approves; I mean that decent aſſurance which ſucceeds better in indifferent things than a ruſtic baſhfulneſs in things more rare and excellent. I own there are enow who have too good an opinion of their Perſons; but however fairly they carry it, and whatever love they may engage, they would be very ſorry that others ſhould have the ſame ſentiment they have with regard to what more intimately concerns them; they are very eaſy in others not knowing what they know themſelves, becauſe if ſelf-love flatters us, there is a remorſe within which does not; and of imperfections, as well as of crimes, there are few that can abſolve themſelves, when they are made their own judges.

We are as often envious of what others poſſeſs, as we are fond of what we have ourſelves; and it is ſometimes more difficult to give us a good opinion of ourſelves than it is to take it away from us; much leſs is required to diſhearten than to embolden us. There muſt be many good actions to make us aſſume proper courage, and but one bad one is enough to caſt us down.

Further, if it be not permitted to know the good or evil that is in us, wherein would the guilty differ from the innocent? If the one ſaw not their vices in order to conceive horror at them, and the other their virtues in order to

comfort them? Seeing that conſcience makes the juſt bold and the impious to tremble, whence comes this but from the good or bad opinion that we have of ourſelves? And indeed, how could virtue ever find ſatisfaction, if humility was to blind her eyes, that ſhe might not ſee herſelf?

Laſtly, the greateſt diſorder that a bad opinion of ourſelves creates is, that it obligeth us to yield too much to that of others; 'tis a fault equally blameable to truſt too much to our own opinion, as not to truſt to it at all. There are none who create ſo much trouble to themſelves, as thoſe who aim at the approbation of all the world; they look not after truth but numbers; their actions and life is as a picture, which a painter draws according to the advice of every beholder that pretends to inſtruct him, and which he conſequently finds at laſt an abſurd monſter. As ſuch a one ſucceeds better in painting a piece according to the rules of his art, than by following the inſtructions of every critic, ſo we ſhould often act more wiſely by following our own opinion than by giving attention to ſo many counſellors.

So far then a good opinion of ourſelves is ſometimes neceſſary; let us now ſee wherein the ſame may prove detrimental and of bad conſequence. How great the miſchief of ſelf-love! What diſorders does it create, ſince the moſt beautiful creatures in the world are rendered

ugly

ugly by this infamous paſſion? And that very angel, which ſhone more bright and ſplendid than the morning-ſtar, became hereby the prince of darkneſs*: At leaſt we may learn from hence, that as the love of God dwells not but in the contempt we have for ourſelves, ſo the love of ourſelves dwells not but in the breaſt that is remiſs in its love towards God; we may learn from hence, that when ſelf-love makes us aſpire to thrones and high-places, God caſts us down to the abyſs below; and that tho' we have the form and ſpirit of an angel, as ſoon as we begin paſſionately to love ourſelves, we become altogether diſagreeable and incur the hatred of all the world.

And indeed, this is no more than what is juſt, ſince commonly they who are ambitious to receive reſpect from all, ſeldom vouchſafe to render it to any one themſelves; thoſe who approve of every thing they do themſelves, think every thing amiſs that is done by others; and I am not at all ſurpriſed that they ſhould entertain an indifference and contempt for all the world, whoſe whole eſteem and love are ingroſſed by their own dear ſelves. What blindneſs is this! ſince every one cannot but have ſome love for themſelves, we ſhould conſider how tyrannical it is to claim that regard from others, which we never deſign to repay. We cannot bear the leaſt contempt ourſelves, and

* Iſa. xiv. 12.

yet are unwilling to ſhew the leaſt reſpect; we expect that others ſhould have as much patience as we have vanity; without conſidering that ſelf-love promiſeth ſuperiority to others as well as to ourſelves, and that they, whom perhaps we eſteem ſo much below us, claim the ſame privilege over us.

Herein conſiſts particularly the tyranny of ſelf-love; but it ſo happens ſometimes that, by the permiſſion of providence, none are more contemptible than thoſe who affect an univerſal eſteem; they even make themſelves quite intolerable. As *Pompey* paſſed through the city of *Athens*, ſome one, in honour to him, wrote on all the public places, *That he was ſo much a god, as he thought himſelf man**. But as this was ſaid in praiſe of his modeſty, and ſweetneſs of temper, we may ſay of the vanity of many, they are as much brutes as they think themſelves rational. Indeed when we ſhew that we have too good an opinion of ourſelves, there is no one but muſt needs have the reverſe; as there are no defects but what humility may make tolerable, ſo there is no merit but what vanity will render odious.

Let us examine further into the reaſon of this; when we give glory to ourſelves, we oblige others juſtly to deny it us. Praiſe, as well as

* Ϝοσον ὢν ἄνθρωπος οἶδας, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐ Θεός. *Plutarch. in vita Pompeii.*

beauty,

beauty, is a foreign good; the one depends upon the eyes of the beholder, the other on the tongues of thoſe who admire us; as beauty is for others, praiſe is from others. No one owes it to us any longer, when we have taken it of ourſelves. Whatever perfections we may have, others have no reaſon to pay any thing to our merit, when we ſubmit nothing to their liberty, and tyrannically ſeize what we ought to wait for from their courteſy.

It is very wrong to preſent ourſelves with honour: Self-love commits a robbery herein, ſince, if honour belongs rather to the giver than to the receiver, for a man to beſtow praiſes on himſelf is to enrich himſelf with a foreign good, which he cannot poſſeſs juſtly but by way of gift. It is to act as *Epicurus* did, who, having a long while made love to glory but in vain, was determined to take her by force, and enjoy by violence what he could not obtain by courteſy. To give honour to ourſelves, and to feed upon our own opinions is like the poet's *Ereſichthon**, who was ſo preſſed with hunger that at laſt he eat his own fleſh.

Thus a good opinion of ourſelves begets contempt, and ſelf-love procures the hatred of all that know us; but further to evince the unprofitableneſs thereof, let us ſee what perſons they are that are moſt ſubject to this folly: It generally happens, that they who have the leaſt

* Ovid. Met. lib. VIII. *ad finem.*

merit have the beſt opinion of themſelves; the greateſt of their imperfections is, that they know them not. In conſidering what many are in their own opinion, and what they are in fact, I am perſuaded that ſeveral miſtake themſelves for other people; fabulous hiſtory gives us an excellent example of this error, and a truer repreſentation of ſelf-love cannot be found than in that of *Polypheme**.

He had but one eye, which look'd horrible in the midſt of his forehead; a rake ſerv'd him for a comb, a ſcythe for a razor, and the ocean for a glaſs; yet he thought himſelf handſom, and worthy a lady's affection. With all his uglineſs he was ſurpris'd that young *Acis*, who challeng'd love from all that had eyes or reaſon, ſhould ſtand fairer than himſelf in the good graces of *Galatea*; thus it is, that the moſt imperfect impoſe upon themſelves, and even monſters think themſelves handſom; thus it is, that ſelf-love never makes a juſt compariſon, eſpecially when we ourſelves are both judge and party; ſeeing that *Polypheme* thought himſelf more courteous than *Acis*, a frightful *Cyclops* more amiable than a handſom ſhepherd.

Indeed nature herſelf would ſeem unjuſt in thus adding blindneſs to thoſe whom ſhe hath given ſuch great defects to, were ſhe not excuſable, in that having given them no merit ſhe at leaſt

* Ovid. lib. XIII. ver. 760. Theocr. Idyll. 11. Lucian.

hath

hath not taken away their opinion of it, leſt their knowledge of themſelves ſhould make them their own executioners, leſt knowing how unworthy they are to live they ſhould chooſe to die. There are ſome who really have merit, and others only think they have; where nature hath not beſtowed real favours, ſhe at leaſt hath given imaginary ones.

How are ſome abuſed in order to content them! What a ſtrange impoſtor is ſelf-love! It depaints our merits greater, and our faults leſs than they really are.

And notwithſtanding knowledge as well as ſight depends upon a proper diſtance, love or hatred removes us too far, or draws us too near the object; ſelf-love cannot keep a juſt perſpective. As the elements are neither heavy nor light in their own natural place, being there at reſt, ſo we neither ſee the deformity nor feel the weight of ſins that are within us; we muſt draw them from the centre, to judge truly of their nature and quality; we muſt transfer ſin to another perſon, and ſee how blameable it is in him, or otherwiſe we ſhall not condemn ourſelves for it.

Self-love not only hinders us from knowing our own defects, but alſo from improving our merit; by thinking that we have thoſe qualities which we have not, but in opinion only, we neglect to acquire thoſe we ought to have in fact. Why ſhould we labour in ſearching after a good which we think ourſelves in full poſſeſſion of?

Why

Why ſhould we ſerve an apprenticeſhip to a trade that we ſeem already maſters of? This error ſtops in their career thoſe that have good deſigns, or brings to decay thoſe who have great poſſeſſions; ſelf-love hinders them from coming to perfection, or taking a proper care of what they have; but the deſire of virtue as well as that of wealth ought to increaſe by poſſeſſion. As there is always ſomething to be ſought, there is always ſomething to be deſired; and as formerly vanity made * a great monarch weep at the report of an imaginary world; and when he was in poſſeſſion of the whole univerſe, he ſtill found ſomething more to deſire; we may learn from hence, that we ought always to aſpire to ſome perfection that we have not; that good men ſhould have the like ambition as conquerors; and that the deſire of ſtill riſing in virtue, as well as in dominion, is a fire that gathers ſtrength from continual fuel, and a laudable ambition that extends its enterpriſes beyond the limits of the world.

A good opinion of ourſelves is altogether contrary to this holy avarice; it makes us content with little or nothing; we continue poor, becauſe we think ourſelves rich; but as an excellent remedy for this, we muſt conſider not ſo much what we have as what we ſtill want. This is the only way to baniſh ſelf-conceit, becauſe, by comparing the little good that is in us,

* Alexander in Quint. Curt. Plutar. in vita Alexndri.

with

with that which there ought to be, we ſhall be aſhamed inſtead of being proud, and ſay with thoſe holy perſonages of old, after the practice of many virtues, *Let us ſet about doing good.*

Enough has been ſaid concerning the bad effects of ſelf-love, let us now deſcribe the two principal ſigns thereof; the firſt is, that they who have too good an opinion of themſelves, deſire others to indulge the ſame paſſions with them, and ſcarce ever ſpeak but of their own merit; this is the moſt viſible ſign of ſelf-love and ſelf-conceit. As theſe admire and adore all that they do or think, if we would not diſoblige them, we muſt never contradict them; we muſt always follow their ſentiment, without regarding whether it be contrary or conformable to reaſon; they know that imitation is a certain ſign of love and reſpect, and therefore they deſire that every one ſhould accommodate themſelves to their humour. *Omphale* commanded *Hercules* to ſpin*; and to continue in the favour of that lady, the hero laid aſide his club for the diſtaff and ſpindle; ſuch is the vanity of many women, and ſuch the ſubmiſſion of many men. In a word, ſuch women love nothing but themſelves, and however fair they carry it, intereſt is their idol.

Another ſign of ſelf-conceit is, that as they are idolaters of their own perſons, they ſeldom ſpeak but of their own excellence; or to be al-

* *Plutarch*, on old men, *&c.* Soph. Trachin. 360.

together

together troubleſom and impertinent, if they boaſt not of their merit, they will give you a long detail of their maladies and misfortunes; they deſire we ſhould either praiſe or bewail them; they delight in cauſing admiration or pity; nor can we ſay they are not blameable herein, tho' they boaſt of virtues which they really have; for if it be not falſe, it is vanity. As God was once provoked by a great king * at his numbering his people, ſo will he be offended at our recounting our virtues; he would not that we ſhould know the number of them, any more than that prince ſhould know the number of his ſubjects.

Beſides, there is oftentimes as much vanity in a man's confeſſing his imperfections, as in talking of his merit; there is an ambition in endeavouring to appear humble, and I agree with *Ariſtotle* †, that *there is ſometimes as much arrogance in a man's undervaluing himſelf, as in boaſting*; and that *the greateſt and moſt dangerous ambition of all, conſiſts in an affectation of humility*; ſo that I think *Alexander* much more excuſable than *Diogenes*, becauſe this prince diſſembled not his pretenſions, whereas the ſophiſt affected a way to glory by turning his back to it ‡. A feigned baſhfulneſs too common in this age! when we pretend to have a bad opinion of

* 2 Sam. xxiv.

† Ethic. lib. iv. cap. 7. On truth and its extremes.

‡ See *Plutarch*'s life of *Alexander*, and on virtue.

ourſelves,

ourſelves, that others may have a good one; when we blame ourſelves, that others may praiſe us; and laſtly, when we fly from glory, as *Tiberius* did from empire *; I mean, ſo as to take it ill if our refuſal be accepted.

CHAP. II.

Of NOBILITY *by* INHERITANCE, *and by* VIRTUE.

THERE is no doubt but we differ more in the manner of our lives than in birth; and I think it juſt, what is ſaid by one of the ancients, that all blood is of the ſame colour, or that there is no other difference in it than what is cauſed by ſickneſs or health; but there are certain ſeeds in us, by ſome call'd half-virtues, and which are not leſs common to perſons of low birth than to thoſe of an illuſtrious family.

The reaſon is, that to make any one more excellent than another, nature can beſtow but theſe four favours, beauty, health, ſtrength of body, and a right diſpoſition of its organs; and how often do we ſee theſe rich endowments depraved and vitiated by idleneſs, effeminacy, and luxury? What noblemen excel others in, more commonly ariſeth from education than birth.

* Tacit. Annal. lib. 1. Suetonius in vit. Tiber.

As

As we ſee many of mean extraction, who have a benevolent heart, and a generous ſpirit; ſo we ſee many of a good family, that have neither underſtanding nor courage, and even more imperfections than the dregs of the common people.

As great rivers flow from a ſmall ſpring, we ſometimes meet with very eminent perſonages of low extraction; *Iphicrates* * was the ſon of a tailor, *Virgil* of a potter, and *Pythagoras* of an ingraver †; the muſes were poor, and if noble, it was not upon account of their puiſſance but their skill in the ſciences. So much for art; and with regard to fortune, among the men I ſhall mention only *C. Marius*, who tho' of mean birth raiſed himſelf by his virtue to ſuch grandeur, that he was ſeven times conſul of *Rome*, and often preſerv'd the city from the attack of its moſt powerful enemies ‡. And among the women I ſhall only name *Athenais*, who, being the daughter of a philoſopher, acquired ſo great credit for her merit and beauty, that *Theodoſius* took her to wife, and ſhe became one of the moſt illuſtrious among the princeſſes of famous memory.

* A famous general of *Athens*, who, being reproach'd by a certain coxcomb of his low birth, ſaid, *True ſir, I intend to be the firſt of my family, as you are the laſt of yours.* Plutarch. Aphoriſm. Xenoph. Hiſt. Græc.

† His name was Mnesarchus.

‡ See his life in *Plutarch.*

From

From whence we learn, that it is not ſo much to be born great as to raiſe ourſelves; what an idle fancy is it to value ourſelves upon a nobility to which we have contributed nothing, and in which the painters on a wall, or the epitaphs upon a monument, bear a greater ſhare than ourſelves! as if true nobility ought not to appear more in our actions than in a coat of arms, or upon a medal. We ſhould rather have regard to our end than to our birth; it matters little from whom we have received life ſo it be good. If our cradle be not illuſtrious, we ſhould endeavour to make our tomb ſo; this will be more glorious for us, becauſe the one depends upon accident, the other upon our own probity.

What ſatisfaction is there in ſeeing weeds ſpring up in a fine field, or a falſe ſtone ſet in gold? As no honour can redound to a proſtitute from her being born of a chaſte mother; ſo no infamy can accrue to a virtuous woman from her being born of vitious parents; the one but heightens her glory hereby, the other her diſgrace. Of what advantage was it to *Cham* * that he was the ſon of *Noah*? Or what diſſervice to *Abraham*, that he was born of *Thara* †, and that he who was ſo zealous in the ſervice of the true God, was begot by a father who was an idolater? It is as ridiculous for a man to boaſt his being born

* Gen. ix. 22. † Or Terah, Gen. xi. 26. Joſh. xxiv. 2. 1 Chron. i. 26. Luke iii. 34.

of

of illuſtrious parents, as for a dwarf to brag of his being deſcended from Giants; and who thinks the ſtature of his anceſtors can excuſe the imperfection of his own: What can be more ſhameful than to found our reputation upon the virtue of others?

If the goodneſs of parents hath ſometimes ſeemed to deſcend upon their children, how often have we ſeen the contrary? Seldom does the merit of our anceſtors reach down to us. Virtue, in deſcending from its firſt ſource, acts the contrary part to rivers; the origin of theſe is ſmall, but they ſwell and expand themſelves as they flow along; whereas virtue, however great at firſt, gradually decreaſeth in proportion to the diſtance from its firſt ſpring; from an head of gold we deſcend to feet of clay: And methinks *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks like a philoſopher, when he ſays, that *we receive more from our fathers than from our grandfathers; and that virtue, the more recent, is the better and ſtronger.*

And yet to hear many boaſt of the ſplendor of their anceſtors, one would think their virtue muſt infallibly deſcend upon them, as the genus deſcends in the ſpecies, and the ſpecies in individuals. Ridiculous fancy! as if no one could ever degenerate from his race, or virtue depended not more upon our choice and liberty than upon our birth! Beſides, whatever may be ſaid of the progreſs of nobility, we cannot ſay the

ſame

ſame of its beginnings; for had not the firſt of any family, that is now noble, a father that was not ſo? By what means could he change the blood of his grandfather? Or how can he communicate other inclinations, or other natural powers to his children, than what he received from his forefathers!

Thus ſome nobles lay an imaginary claim to virtue; thus we often ſee a title without poſſeſſion, and that it is not nature but their vanity that lifts them up ſo much above others. Nay, to examine the lives of ſome, it ſeems, as if to be noble was nothing elſe but to be ignorant with leſs ſhame, and vitious with more boldneſs and impunity.

Yet on the other hand, we muſt own, that whatever evil attends nobility by inheritance, it is not becauſe it is bad in itſelf, but becauſe it is abuſed; nobility is a character of great advantage, it leads us ſo forcibly to what is good that it ſeems, as it were, a natural virtue. How is it poſſible then for women of an illuſtrious birth not to be ſubject to virtue, ſince they have a natural inclination thereto, the benefit of a proper education from their parents, and the bright example of their anceſtors? Experience frequently ſhews, that the noble are more generous in time of danger, more polite in converſation, and more adroit in whatever they undertake; ſo that even the countenance of ſeveral ſhews a more than ordinary greatneſs of ſoul.

But

But to conclude with what is of the greateſt moment in this reſpect; women of high birth ſhould endeavour to join the nobility of virtue with that of inheritance; as merit can render thoſe illuſtrious who are but of mean extraction, vice will make thoſe infamous that are of the beſt of families. The counſel of ſaint *Jerom* to *Celantia* is worthy the obſervation of the whole ſex: "*We ought*, ſays he, *to eſteem that* "*nobility which pleaſeth God, which depends* "*upon ourſelves, and is inſeparable from virtue*". There are three ſorts of nobility, divine, worldly, and moral; the divine relates to the heavenly origin of the ſoul, the worldly to anceſtry and the genealogy of families, the moral only to virtue, which we ought to have in order to gain true eſteem: The divine depends upon the power of God, the worldly upon the greatneſs of our birth, the moral upon the liberty of our mind; if we conſider well the importance of the firſt, we ſhall ſet leſs value upon the ſecond, and render ourſelves more capable of the third.

Laſtly, As our anceſtors wore moons on their ſhoes * as marks of their nobility, I cannot give a better example here than that in holy writ †, where it is ſaid; *And there appeared a woman clothed with the ſun; upon her head was a crown of ſtars, and the moon under her feet.* To re-

* This cuſtom was obſerv'd by the nobleſt ſenators of *Rome*. See the reaſon of it in *Plutarch* on *Roman* queſtions.

† Rev. xii. 1.

ſemble

ſemble this viſion, women ſhould contemn that which moſt of them adore; they muſt throw under foot the ſparkling vanities that many carry in their head, and ſeek the whole ſplendor of their nobility in being illumin'd by the grace of God, and crown'd with virtue.

CHAP. III.

Of AMBITION *compared with* LOVE.

AS reaſon ſeems the mother of love, ambition ſometimes ſeems the mother of virtue; as ambition is a bad cauſe which yet may have good effects, love is ſometimes a bad effect from a good cauſe; theſe two paſſions have a fair appearance, but are hazardous in their progreſs, and have oftentimes a tragical end: On the bad part they act differently, either by union or diviſion, as the one ſometimes attacheth us to that which is worthy our hate, and the other ſeparates us from that which is worthy our regard. If in loving we offend againſt reaſon by an unworthy alliance, in affecting dominion we violate even the laws of nature, in renouncing and contemning what ſhe holds moſt dear and ſacred.

Love and ambition full often carry women to the utmoſt extremities; if they can defend themſelves from the tyranny of theſe two paſſions, they will certainly find the means of living

ing with leſs inquietude and more ſolid comfort. The ambitious and the amorous can never enjoy a quiet mind; theſe two paſſions are the tyrants of life; love begins, and ambition finiſhes it; the one is never free from deſires, nor the other without anxious hope: The more to abuſe us, they are continually preſenting us with ſome new appearances, either of grandeur or pleaſure; and to keep us ſtill in heart, they always promiſe us more than they give. We will now examine which of the two is attended with the worſe conſequences to the fair ſex.

It ſeems at firſt as if ambition had more influence on women than love, becauſe a deſire of exalting themſelves is more natural than that of ſubjection; ambition promiſes thrones of grandeur, but love preſents only a ſervile yoke; the one offers us ſceptres, the other chains. Love demands our liberty from us, ambition promiſeth that of others; and however powerful love may be, upon a thorough examination we ſhall find that whatever ſtrength it hath, it borrows it from ambition; it is this which lighteth up his torch; it is this that raiſes their ſpirits, and animates them to great deſigns and the moſt noble enterpriſes. He that would take away ambition from love, deprives him of his wings; it ſeems theſe two paſſions have need of each other for their mutual ſupport; love ſoftens ambition, and ambition fires love; without love ambition could have neither ſweet-

neſs

neſs nor repoſe, without ambition love could have neither ſtrength nor courage.

And indeed if love was exempt from ambition, would it not be alſo free from jealouſy? It is the ſame ambition which cauſeth, that as we cannot bear an equal in power we cannot bear a rival in love. Moreover ambition heightens love, according to the oppoſition or difficulty it meets with in its perſuits. *Cato* * thought no more of loving his wife, after he had divorc'd her; he look'd upon her rather as a friend than a wife. *Meſſalina* was grievouſly vexed that *Claudius* was not jealous of her; ſhe deſired rather to inſpire him with fear than love; ſhe had rather he ſhould eſteem her beauty than her fidelity †. Many like her deſpiſe the pleaſures they can too eaſily enjoy; where they ſtand not upon a point of honour, they ſoon fall into diſguſt and inconſtancy; this is a vanity too common to love, to wiſh that many ſhould endeavour after what itſelf would wholly enjoy alone. Let us examine farther into this matter; jealouſy comes not leſs from ambition than from love; as one is the father, the other is the mother of it. Love aſpires to monarchy as well as ambition; envy regards the fortune, jealouſy

* *Cato* of *Utica:* He had three wives, *Servilia*, *Attilia*, and *Martia*, and was unhappy in them all. I take *Attilia* to be the wife here mention'd. See his life in *Plutarch.*

† Tacit. Annal. XII.

the

the affection; if they differ in their effects, they differ not in their nature and origin; the one fears to have the numbers of its ſubjects diminiſhed, the other fears to have them increaſed. Indeed it ſeems to be the ſame paſſion, but to have different objects; jealouſy hath reſpect to pleaſure, envy to glory. And what difference is there in ſaying, that envy is a jealouſy with regard to fortune, or that jealouſy is envy with regard to love? In ſhort envy is an ambition, which cannot endure a companion in dominion; jealouſy is an ambition, which cannot endure one in love; from hence it is manifeſt that ambition makes love more ſenſible, jealous, active, and courageous; and that they who prove the power of love, prove at the ſame time that of ambition, ſince it is this which encourageth the lover to ſurmount all difficulties, and to paſs by no injury without reſentment and revenge.

But further, to give a ſtronger reaſon why it is more difficult to cure ambition than love; as this paſſion is more pure, it is alſo more ſtrong and laſting; it does not confine itſelf to nature, it depends not on the vigor of the conſtitution; it is more ſpiritual than love, it is not therefore to be cured or lowered by bleeding or ſickneſs. As it is attached to the ſoul it ſeems to borrow ſomewhat of its immortality; it is ſometimes more ſtrong when the ſenſes are weaker; indeed ambition ſeems the paſſion of angels, love

that

that of men; love ſeems the malady of the body, ambition that of the mind.

Hence ariſes the difficulty of finding a proper remedy, ſo that they who are infected with it cannot caſt it off before death; and therefore we may ſooner hope to find an end of love than of ambition, becauſe love may by chance meet with ſome ſatisfaction, but ambition never any. Love may die by ſatiety, ambition ſtill thrives by hunger; the deſire always exceeds poſſeſſion; one object may content the former, but not the whole world the latter. In ſhort love may ſometimes find reſt, but ambition labours without ceaſing; enjoyment irritates this paſſion; its object, when thought within reach, ſteals away; it cannot quench its thirſt any more than *Tantalus*; it cannot taſte what it hath got, becauſe the deſire of glory to come hinders it from being ſatisfied with the preſent.

Thus then ambition is the more powerful, becauſe it is the more ſpiritual; and likewiſe more difficult to be guarded againſt than love, becauſe it is more ſubtile; but granting it were more poſſible to cure it, we ſeldom are willing; it is a paſſion that pleaſeth us, its tyranny is agreeable, and there are more who complain of love than of ambition; a principal cauſe of this I think is, that pleaſure has a certain apprehenſion of ſhame, which glory hath not. Ambition ſeeks the public ſtage, love rather chooſes

darkneſs; pleaſure hides itſelf, glory cannot expoſe itſelf too much; this covets witneſſes, and that ſhuns them. After all, we muſt not be ſurpris'd that this paſſion hath ſo great influence on the mind of ſeveral women; and that they are leſs induſtrious to conceal their deſigns when they are poſſeſs'd with vanity, than when they indulge an affection: As modeſty ſeems inſeparable from their ſex, there is no ſort of crime they endeavour to avoid more than ſuch as would bring them to ſhame; and for this reaſon they ſooner yield to ambition than love.

But further, in order to ſhew to what extremities ambition carries them, we will confirm the former reaſons by ſome examples; this is a very important point; indeed there is no deſign ſo black, which ambition ſcruples to conceive; there is no attempt ſo ſacrilegious that it does not inſpire, nor any thing ſo ſacred that it dares not to profane. What crime is there, which an ambitious woman ſcorns to perpetrate? She is blind, inconſtant, perfidious, cruel; ſhe employs poiſon, ſword, and even the magic arts.

Medea did much for love, but ſtill more for ambition; love oblig'd her to leave all her relations to follow *Jaſon*; but ambition made her abandon *Jaſon* himſelf for the ſake of revenge. Love made her blind, ambition taught her magic *. Love is not tranſported but with ſweetneſs; it is ambition which makes her furious,

* Eurip. Medea. Ovid. Epiſt. Met. lib. vii. ver. 1. and

and puts her upon the execution of ſuch horrid deeds; without this, love would be as a ſmooth and calm ſea; it is this paſſion that ſtirs it, and works up ſtorm and tempeſt.

There is nothing that makes women more cruel than ambition; when the ambitious think themſelves injur'd, there is no room to expect pardon or pity; tho' *Orpheus* charm'd the woods and rocks, he could not calm the women whom ambition had made furious; and that excellent muſician, who had prevail'd upon the infernals themſelves by the ſweetneſs of his ſong, was torn to pieces by the hands of the *Bacchanals* *. When they are fired with this paſſion, there is nothing ſo juſt and perfect that they would not attempt its ruin; *Monſters*, ſays an eminent author, *preſerve the prophets*; *but women, tranſported with ambition and revenge, put them to death.* A whale preſerv'd *Jonas* †, and *Jeſabel* perſecuted *Elijah* ‡; *Daniel* is ſafe among lions ‖, and ſaint *John* the baptiſt is condemn'd at the requeſt of an ambitious *Courteſan* **.

Yet more, the ambitious ſpill not only the blood of others but their own; in ſacred hiſtory we read that *Athaliah* ſlew her children, that herſelf might reign ††; and in profane hiſtory, that

* Virg. Georg. lib. IV. ver. 521.
† Jonah i. 17. Matth. xii. 39.
‡ 1 Kings xix. 2.
‖ Dan. vi. 18.
** Matth. xiv. 10.
†† 2 Kings xi. 1.

Agrippina * ſuffer'd her children to ſlay her, that they might reign themſelves: Such ſtrange power hath ambition on the ſpirit of ſome women, either in doing evil, or ſuffering it; it is either a martyr or a murderer; it is alike wicked and miſerable: After this we may juſtly ſay, that ambition is a mighty ſpoiler, and that nothing ſeems inviolable to this monſter.

But let us turn the medal, and having ſeen the effects of ambition upon the mind of ſome women, let us now examine the effects of love; and indeed, if ambition breaks through every law to reach the object of its deſire, we may ſay the ſame of love. Love is altogether as bold as ambition, and, I think, ſeldom more juſt; *Scylla* betray'd her parents and her country for the love of *Minos* †; *Ariadne* did as much for *Theſeus* ‡. They ſay that *Pſychè* deſcended to the ſhades below, and to recover what ſhe had loſt, triumph'd over three goddeſſes; *Byblis* fell in love with her brother ‖, and *Myrrha* with her Father. There are many examples of this irregular paſſion in true hiſtory without the fabulous; experience ſhews us but too often how far love will carry women either in doing good or evil in a good or bad cauſe.

* The mother of Nero. Tacit. Annal. 14.

† Ovid. Met. lib. viii. ver. 91.

‡ Ovid. Epiſt. Met. lib. viii. ver. 172. *Plutarch*'s life of *Theſeus*.

‖ Ovid. Met. lib. ix. ver. 454.

What

What is there it will not do, or undertake? There is nothing ſo difficult it cannot ſurmount either by courage or addreſs; there is nothing ſo ſacred it will not ſtrive to corrupt; no crime ſo hainous it will not adviſe; and, to appeal to one of ſufficient experience, had not the woman of *Samaria* good reaſon to ſay publicly, that he who had rebuked her for this paſſion *had told her all things that ever ſhe did* *? To mention profane love, is to ſay every thing; it is to make an abridgment of all kinds of evil.

Whatever may be ſaid of ambition, love is ſtill more powerful; it is that among the paſſions which is the *primum mobile* of the heavens; it gives motion to all the reſt; and to philoſophiſe aright, all the paſſions ſeem but the effect of love; it is this that fears, hopes, deſires, laughs with joy, mourns with ſorrow, and languiſhes with deſpair; it hath great influence therefore on our mind, and is a malady which is the ſource and cauſe of all other.

The ſoul depends on love, love on the object, and the object on our choice; but, as we are entirely free before love hath taken poſſeſſion of us, when in his power we become as intirely ſlaves. Love depends at firſt upon our liberty, but after choice we depend altogether upon his tyranny; the great misfortune is, that his empire ſeems ſweet, and ſo inchanting that

* John iv. 29.

we can ſcarce ever complain of hardſhip. Love therefore more abſolutely engages the mind than ambition; ſince whatever natural inclination we have to exalt ourſelves, love will ſtill humble us; and we may judge of his ſuperior power, when he makes us prefer his chains to the ſcepters of ambition.

Love alſo muſt needs be more powerful than ambition, as it changes the deſire of command into that of obedience; ambition yields to love, and there have been princes that had rather ſerve a beauty than command provinces and kingdoms. If ambition made *Phaeton* * mount from earth to heaven, love made *Apollo* deſcend from heaven to earth; and as the poets feign'd that ambition hath raiſed even men above their natural ſtrength, they likewiſe ſay that love hath debaſed the gods themſelves below their dignity.

Is it not as great a miracle to ſee greatneſs humbled, as to ſee meanneſs exalted? Herein love ſeems not leſs juſt than powerful, and its empire more ſupportable than that of ambition; becauſe if love wou'd reign, it will alſo obey; if it demands ſubmiſſion, it will likewiſe pay it; love is a mutual empire of perſons, who command together and together ſerve.

And to ſay that ambition muſt be more powerful, becauſe it is more pure, and that it is more attached to the mind, as love is rather

* Ovid. Met. lib. i. ver. 752.

to

to the will and ſenſes; this reaſon ſeems as weak to me, as others think it ſtrong; this ſhews, that as the will is the miſtreſs of the faculties, love which depends thereon is queen of the paſſions; and it is eaſy to prove this; we become maſters of an object by knowledge, but by love we become its ſlaves. The mind abſtracts to itſelf what it knows, the will gives itſelf up to what it loves; ſo that if the object enters the mind in order to be known, the will hazards itſelf in love. See we not plainly therefore that it is more difficult to make us go, as it were, from ourſelves to love an object, than to take it to ourſelves in order to know it; and that the object of ambition cannot harm us ſo much as that of love, becauſe ambition is miſtreſs of that which it poſſeſſeth, and the will a captive to what it loves.

But more clearly, ſince ambition is attached to the mind, we may eaſily enough judge from hence that it is weaker than love; becauſe it infects the mind only, whereas love attacks both the mind and the ſenſes: Love is often victorious over two parties at the ſame time, ambition but over one; as it is eaſier to defend ourſelves againſt an opinion than a fever, it is eaſier to cure ambition than love; to reſiſt ambition we have but one enemy to conquer, to oppoſe love we have two; we muſt not ſay therefore that love is the weaker becauſe it depends upon the body; and that as it is more

material, it is more capable of diminution or cure; becauſe it rages in the veins, does not the ſoul feel it? On the contrary, it is this that makes it the more powerful, the ſenſes being gain'd by this paſſion, they are continually peſtering reaſon with the idea of the objects that pleaſe them.

Beſides, to judge rightly of theſe two paſſions, ambition is not more ſpiritual but more imaginary. Love can ſeparate itſelf from matter ſo well as ambition; it is the mind that loves beauty, as well as deſires dominion; and if the ſenſes ſometimes take part in its deſigns, they are but the infamous ſervants that accept what their maſters refuſe *; as among the elements there are none more pure than fire, among the paſſions there is none more pure than love; it is more ſubtile as it is more ſtrong. I am not ſpeaking of this paſſion as it is in its abuſe, but as it is really in its own nature. There is no doubt then but that love is very powerful over the minds of many, and that it is of great moment to know the means of preſervation, when it is contrary to reaſon.

Having given therefore a deſcription of this diſeaſe let us now look out for a remedy; tho' I pretend not infallibly to cure an evil, which ſo many have thought incurable; yet to this purpoſe nothing can ſerve better than to do by prudence what *Pſyché* did by chance; I mean,

* Alluding to the ſtory of Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 20.

to

to light up the lamp that will at leaſt diſcover what is ſhameful and ridiculous in this paſſion. Reaſon gives it birth, but it alſo puts an end to it; it may be the mother and yet the deſtroyer of it; it may be its cradle and its tomb. Love is born in light, but lives in darkneſs; reaſon, having conceiv'd it by means of knowledge, may likewiſe thereupon treat it with ſcorn and contempt.

If we conſider'd well the end of love, we ſhould be more afraid of its beginning; and we ſhould not be ſo fond of imbarking on this ſea, if we conſider'd the ſhelves and frequent wrecks that are therein. The getting out of this labyrinth is as difficult as the entrance is eaſy; ſo that there is no better remedy to cure this paſſion than to obſerve the miſcarriages and miſeries that oftentimes attend it. Since profane love, in the opinion of ſaint *Jerom*, *is nothing elſe but the forgetfulneſs of reaſon*, and that in fact, there is no ſuch ſalutary antidote to love as wiſdom, we muſt employ in our defence all the knowledge and light we have, in conſidering how much care and inquietude it brings upon us, how it effeminates the heart, how many torments it involves us in, and in what ſtrange enterpriſes it makes us oftentimes engage.

Crates * ſaid of lovers, *that if time and faſting could not conquer this paſſion, there was no*

* A philoſopher of *Thebes*. Plutarch. Sympoſ. lib. ii.

other remedy but death; but herein he ſpoke neither as a phyſician nor a philoſopher. This is ſtrange counſel indeed; this is not the ſentiment of a wiſe but of a deſperate man; to baniſh love, there is no need to take away life, but error only; and indeed this is one of the moſt powerful remedies that are; and herein the maladies of the ſoul are altogether different from thoſe of the body. We may ſometimes cure maladies of the body by diverſion, and on the contrary thoſe of the ſoul by attention. We are apt to ſay to thoſe that are in pain, *Don't think of it*; but we may ſay to thoſe whom love hath blinded, *Think well of it*. In thinking on the wounds of the body we ſometimes increaſe the pain; but by reflecting on the follies of the mind, we are induc'd to apply a remedy.

Nevertheleſs we muſt own, that love may be without offence; as in every heat there is not a fever, every ſort of love is not attended with bad conſequences; it is not always reaſon's enemy, it may be a virtue as well as a paſſion. In a word, there is nothing ſo good or ſo bad as love, but the right uſe or abuſe thereof depends upon our liberty; as we paint it an infant, we muſt lead it leſt it ſhould loſe itſelf; it is a malicious blind boy who endeavours nothing more than to hood-wink his guide, that they may both loſe their way together.

As for ambition it requires a different method of cure, becauſe to contemn the forbidden

pleaſures

pleaſures that love preſents, we muſt think them unworthy of us; and to ſhun the glory that ambition promiſeth, we muſt think ourſelves unworthy of it. To guard ourſelves againſt the power of love, we muſt have reſpect to the dignity of our nature; to guard ourſelves againſt the temptations of ambition, we muſt conſider our weakneſs; to yield to love, is too much to debaſe ourſelves; to yield to ambition, is too much to exalt ourſelves. If pleaſure is too much below us; grandeur and glory are as much above us.

CHAP. IV.

Of MARRIAGE *and* CELIBACY.

CELIBACY declines not the delights of life, but refines them; it changes thoſe that are groſs into thoſe that are ſpiritual and more ſolid; ſo that to prefer a ſingle ſtate to marriage for the tranquillity and ſalvation of the ſoul, is to change a bed of thorns for a bed of roſes; it is to quit labour for the enjoyment of reſt.

Not that I would blame marriage, which our Lord himſelf approved of by his preſence, by his benediction, and miracles. His birth did honour to the marriage-ſtate as well as to virginity; tho' he permits the one, he adviſeth the other

other. I do not ſay that it is bad, but ſometimes very unhappy; according to the uſe or abuſe of it there is nothing worſe or better; it is the hell or the paradiſe of this world.

Ingenuouſly to recount the evils of it; what pleaſure can there be with a coquette, who will live rather according to her own humour than according to reaſon; and who would fain revive the old cuſtom of *Sparta*, where the women had the maſtery over their husbands*? What contentment can there be in living with the querulous and peeviſh, who are continually grumbling, and ſcarce ever in a good-humour or with a ſmiling countenance? What ſatisfaction in an hypocrite who flatters not but to deceive, who frequents the ſacred places only by way of blind, and to render her the leſs ſuſpected of going where ſhe ought not, and appears good the more conveniently to do evil. Laſtly, what advantage is it to be united with the crafty and perfidious, who will have a thouſand inventions and cabals to carry on her vile intrigues; who will diſhonour you be you ever ſo innocent, and with whom not only reputation is in danger but life itſelf? But to judge of this from an example well known to all the world, was it not *Eve* that ſeduced *Adam* to ſin, who deprived him of his innocence and happineſs, who made him at the ſame time guilty and miſerable?

* See *Plutarch*, in the life of *Lycurgus*.

But

But if men have juſt reaſon to complain herein, women have likewiſe too often the ſame; whatever evil there may be in the marriage-ſtate, women generally bear the greater ſhare of it, becauſe it is leſs troubleſom to command a bad diſpoſition than to obey it. Cuſtom deprives them of the right of ſelf-defence; and whatever tyranny they are ſubject to they muſt bear it, while the others are pleas'd to exerciſe it upon them.

And indeed what greater martyrdom can be conceiv'd than for a woman to be conſtrained to paſs her life with a man that hath neither generoſity nor probity; who will confine her like a ſlave to ſatisfy an unjuſt ſuſpicion, and act rather as a ſpy than an husband; who will not permit her either the converſation of honeſt men, or the reading good books; who will be jealous of her, if handſom; and have an averſion for her, if homely? Indeed we too often ſee the marriage of an *Abigail* with a *Nabal* *, I mean, of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN with a churliſh brute.

But you will ſay, however this be there is no reaſon to complain, becauſe marriage depends upon our own choice and liberty; indeed tho' we may ſometimes attribute diſgrace to our own imprudence, yet we muſt own there is always great hazard in this affair however good the intentions. Fortune hath generally greater ſhare

* 1 Sam. xxv.

in

in it than conduct; what ſeems good may not prove ſo, and what really is ſo may not be laſting. Appearance may deceive us at preſent, and a change may happen; men may not always perſevere in truth. As they that now enjoy their health may be taken with ſome incurable diſeaſe, ſo they who entertain good ſentiments to-day may fall into errors that are remedileſs.

We ſometimes therefore ſee marriages that are fair and happy in their beginning, grievous in their progreſs and tragical in their end; it is a ſhort ſtorm that glares with a flaſh and makes a great noiſe for a while, but at laſt diſſolves in ſhowers; it is a ſlight pleaſure that ends in long and bitter diſtaſte, but ſuppoſing this not to happen, nor any change of temper, time itſelf inſenſibly brings on an alteration; this violent paſſion gradually abates of itſelf without our contributing thereto; pleaſure is a libertine, that takes offence at marriage for no other reaſon than becauſe it is in bondage.

After all, do what we will there are ſo many requiſites to make the marriage-ſtate truly happy, that it is almoſt impoſſible to meet with an aſſemblage of them together. *Theophraſtus* required that the wife ſhould be fair, good, and noble, and the husband, healthy, rich, and wiſe. If the happineſs of marriage therefore depends upon theſe three qualifications on each ſide, no wonder that it ſo often fails. As for women, we ſometimes find beauty with a bad heart, and deformity with

with goodneſs, either virtue with low extraction, or vice with high birth: And as for men, it is to be feared that poverty is often joined with merit, or great defaults with wealth. There would be no end of examining into all the conditions that are neceſſary to render the marriage-ſtate happy; let it ſuffice to acknowledge, that whatever prudence may be uſed there is ſome danger in making a bad choice, chiefly on this account, that when it ſhould prove ſo, the evil is remedileſs and repentance unprofitable.

But be this as it will, ſuppoſe a perſon ſhould make as happy a choice as can be, and both the parties well ſatisfied with each other, yet marriage is a ſort of let or hindrance, particularly to the moſt heroic virtues; becauſe it is as a counterpoiſe that weighs us down, and keeps us from riſing to any eminent degree of perfection: The women who have aſpired to make themſelves famous in any great point, have always made profeſſion of a ſingle life.

To conſider thoſe that have excelled in the arts and ſciences, as the Muſes; or in conqueſts, as the Amazons, or in propheſy, as the Sibyls; or in virtue and religion, as the Veſtals; did they not all decline the embarraſment of marriage, as a faſhion of life which in great meaſure would diminiſh the liberty that is neceſſary for eminent virtues and generous enterpriſes? They knew that this effeminates the courage of conquerors and diſturbs the meditation

tation of philoſophers; that there is no reaſon to think that any one would hazard a life on which ſo many other perſons depend; or that any one can ſtudy as he ought amidſt the noiſe and cares of a family: They know that marriage hinders us either from living without inquietude, or dying without regret.

Thus we ſee the inconveniences that attend the marriage-ſtate, let us now conſider what may be found pleaſant, uſeful and commendable therein. I intend not to ſhew how neceſſary it is to all the world, as it ſerves for a remedy to our weakneſs, and to preſerve the name of our anceſtors to lateſt poſterity; as it is holy in its firſt inſtitution, tho' ſometimes profaned in practice; as it is the foundation of all commerce, and the ſtrongeſt tye of all alliances; ſeeing that the firſt ſociety is between man and wife, the ſecond between children and parents, and the third between friends and citizens: And as there are no true families without marriage, there are no cities without families, nor provinvinces without cities. I intend not, I ſay, to ſhew theſe great and fair effects of marriage, however agreeable they are and neceſſary to life; I ſhall not enter upon a ſubject which ſeems not only too ample, but is indeed foreign to my ſubject and deſign.

I ſhall only endeavour to ſhew, that marriage is not contrary to the quiet of life, nor to the practice of the moſt heroic virtues. Some great perſonages

perſonages indeed have been of another opinion; *Pythagoras*, having beſtow'd his daughter in marriage to one of his greateſt enemies, gave this ſtrange reaſon for his ſo doing; "*I could* "*not*, ſays he, *do him a greater miſchief, nor* "*preſent him with any thing worſe than a wife.*" *Socrates* told his friends, that *having three great evils to encounter*, grammar, poverty, and a wife, *ſtudy had delivered him from the firſt, good fortune from the ſecond, but that* marriage *had for ever bound him to the third.* *Cicero* having divorced his wife, ſaid to thoſe who adviſed him to take another, "*that it was impoſſible for* "*a man to marry a wife and philoſophy both to-*"*gether* *."

Thus ſome have decried marriage; but we will uſe theſe very examples to ſhew that their opinion is more injurious than true. Did marriage hinder *Cicero* from being the greateſt Orator of the age? *Pythagoras* from applying himſelf to philoſophy, or *Socrates* to virtue? Did *Solon* †, when he married, renounce his ſtudy and ſtrict morals? Or was he upon this account more wretched or leſs wiſe? Marriage by no means diverts us from generous undertakings, but rather animates us to great actions, that may ſerve for examples and an honour to our poſterity.

One good action is ſufficient to enoble a whole race, and *Epaminondas* ‡ had reaſon to ſay that

* *Plutarch* in the life of *Cicero*.

† One of the ſeven wiſe men of *Greece*.

‡ The *Theban* general. See his life in *Cornelius Nepos*.

he could not leave a better legacy to his ſucceſſors than his conqueſt of the Leuctri. To maintain a family makes not a man timorous but conſiderate; it reſtrains not fortitude, but only raſhneſs; for we cannot but own that a careful concern muſt provoke and encourage us, when we take for our ſpectators a wife and family, who muſt bluſh at our ill-doing, and partake of our glory or our ſhame. When fathers take ſo much pains to heap up wealth for their children, why ſhou'd they not have the ſame care to acquire glory for them? And why ſhould not this care for their poſterity make them as well courageous as covetous?

And to ſay that at leaſt marriage hath its thorns, and that it in ſome meaſure diſturbs the peace of the ſoul, in truth this opinion is not more reaſonable than the former. Marriage is not a perſecution, but a comfort; if we muſt renounce it, becauſe it hath ſometimes proved unhappy, we may as well quit life becauſe it may be unhealthy. Can there be a greater ſatisfaction in life than to have a faithful perſon to whom we may freely diſcover every joy and every ſorrow, and with whom we may intruſt every private thought with an intire confidence?

And where ſhall we find this advantage more complete, than among thoſe that are united by the ſtrongeſt tye and the moſt ſacred alliance? Surely this muſt increaſe the good and leſſen the evil

evil of life. Amity, as all the world confeſs, makes the greateſt part of our felicity; without this there is nothing agreeable in ſociety; without this, glory and riches are but a burden, and pleaſure itſelf hath no reliſh: And where can this be found ſo perfect? where ſo fraught with the moſt pure delights as in the marriage-ſtate? To ſee this plainer, we need only conſider the three principal effects of amity, converſation, community, and reſemblance; for what converſation can be more free and familiar than that between two perſons who have oblig'd themſelves never to part? What community more complete than that of marriage, where one party can engage and fix the other? And what ſo great reſemblance or conformity of affections can there be, as between two perſons who ought to have the ſame heart and the ſame ſoul?

This is very clear; but to come to what more particularly concerns the fair ſex, we muſt not only conclude from what has been ſaid that marriage may be happy, but conſider alſo the means of making it ſo. Women ſhould learn herein that to make their converſation more agreeable, and to evidence a more perfect amity, they ought above all things to have due regard to theſe two qualities, fidelity, and ſweetneſs of temper. In truth the happineſs or miſery of marriage almoſt always depends upon their conduct; if they had as true an affection as they ought to have, they would have more addreſs

addreſs and more patience when there is need of it. They ſeldom can diſcover really what they are but in the time of affliction; it is then they ſhew their virtue and their love.

When *Pompey*, after being vanquiſh'd by *Julius Cæſar*, went to viſit his wife *Cornelia* in the iſle of *Lesbos*, ſhe no ſooner ſaw him than ſhe fell down in a ſwoon and hurt herſelf greatly; but when ſhe came to herſelf ſhe complained of nothing elſe, but that the fall of *Pompey* had hurt her more than the fall of *Cornelia* *: Thus it is, that good wives intereſt themſelves in the afflictions of their husbands; and this is what gives infinite comfort to the moſt wretched, when they ſee another bear ſo affectionate a part in that they ſuffer.

Eraſmus admir'd the affection and courage of *Theſea*, when her husband *Philoxenus* was accuſed of a conſpiracy againſt *Dionyſius* the tyrant whoſe ſiſter ſhe was; he came to her and reproached her for having done wrong in betraying a brother to ſave ſo worthleſs an husband; and that ſhe ought not to have ſuffer'd *Philoxenus* to fly, when he had diſcover'd to her ſo black an attempt.

" *Why ſhould you think*, ſays ſhe, *that an in-*
" *tereſt of an husband ſhould not concern me*
" *more than that of a brother? Have I ſo little*
" *reſolution or affection, that if he had told me*

* She was the daughter of *Metellus Scipio*. *Plutarch* in the life of *Pompey*.

" *his*

" *his deſign, I ſhould have ſuffer'd him to go*
" *away without me? Aſſure yourſelf that a wife*
" *only languiſhes here in pain when her husband*
" *is abſent, and that* Theſea *always thought*
" *herſelf more happy, whatever her condition, to*
" *be called the wife of* Philoxenus *than the ſiſter*
" *of a tyrant*.*"

I own theſe examples are great, but I find none like to *Arria* the wife of *Pætus*; who, when her husband, tho' under ſentence of death yet afraid to die, had not courage enough to be his own executioner, took his poniard, and having plunged it in her boſom drew it out and preſented it to him, ſaying, " *Do as I*
" *have done, and know that the wound I have*
" *given myſelf pains me not, like that which you*
" *muſt ſoon feel†.*" This is the voice and ſentiment of a virtuous woman, who is more concern'd for the pains of her husband than her own; yet how many are far from this perfection, and are more like the wife of *Job* who reproached her husband in his afflictions, who accuſed him of ſtupidity inſtead of exhorting him to patience, and indeed hurt him more than the devil himſelf.

Having ſeen how women ought to teſtify their conſtancy and fidelity to their husbands

* Vide Pauſanias in Attic. Ælian. XII. 47. Caſaubon in Athenæum IV. 11.

† Mart. Epigr. lib. XIV. Tac. Ann. 14. Plin. Epiſt. lib. iii. 16.

under

under the ſevereſt misfortunes, let us now conſider with what ſweetneſs they ought to behave in common converſation. This excellent quality is not leſs important than the other, to make the marriage-ſtate agreeable and happy. Whatever perfection a woman may have, without due complaiſance and ſweetneſs of temper, her virtue itſelf may become troubleſom, and her ill-humour render her whole carriage diſagreeable.

I would not however have them uſe too much artifice and affectation herein, as ſome women do, and hereby make their husbands rather mad than kind; to uſe I know not what poiſonous charms is to deſtroy them inſtead of winning them; it is an honeſt and juſt deſign indeed for a woman to make herſelf as amiable as poſſible in the eyes of her husband; but ſhe muſt take care not to employ forbidden means, tho' it be to gain a commendable end.

But ſetting aſide ſuch abuſes, there is nothing that a woman ought not to do to maintain ſweetneſs and amity. "*Venus*, ſays a great writer, *muſt* "*be accompanied in marriage with the* Muſes, "Mercury, *and the* Graces; *with the* Muſes, *for* "*the diverſion of decent entertainment*; *with* Mer- "cury, *for the perſuaſive encouragement to virtue*; "*and with the* Graces, *to keep up in their con-* "*verſation that ſweetneſs of temper and engag-* "*ing complaiſance which is the ſoul of* amity, "*as* amity *is the ſoul of* marriage." And indeed

deed without this the converſation of the moſt virtuous is not altogether agreeable. *Livia* the wife of *Auguſtus* uſed to ſay, that *in humouring the inclinations of her husband ſhe became intirely his miſtreſs; that the way to command is to obey*, and that *in this alone* women *diſplay their kindneſs and affection* *.

And indeed as we eſteem not a mirrour that gives a falſe reflexion, tho' it be enriched with pearls and ſet round with diamonds; ſo whatever merit and perfection a woman has, the chief good is yet wanting, if ſhe has not ſweetneſs of temper and a tractable diſpoſition to pleaſe her husband. *Plutarch* † therefore juſtly compares an obedient wife to a glaſs that is true; for what can be more complaiſant than ſuch a glaſs? If you ſpeak, the image therein moves its lips; if you grow pale, that likewiſe changes colour; if you go away, it diſappears; it is nothing elſe but your very ſelf. Perhaps it may ſeem too rigorous, to expect a woman ſhould be altogether as conformable to an huſband; yet if we conſider it well, this would not ſeem ſo difficult a task: For as the glaſs is not broken or otherwiſe damag'd by the image ſeen therein, ſo truly a good-humour'd perſon is not at all injur'd by condeſcending to the inclinations of another. I ſay further, that as he who breaks a glaſs into ſeveral pieces ſtill ſees

* Tac. Annal. 1. Suetonius.

† In his conjugal Precepts, §. 12.

his

his image ſeparately in every part; ſo there have been women ſo virtuous and ſo very obedient, that even when their husbands have given them offence, have ſtill honour'd them, and endeavour'd what lay in their power to pleaſe them by their condeſcenſion and ſweet behaviour.

They ſay indeed that ſuch an happy temper is rarely to be found; and that there are more who are like the wife of *Tobit* * than the wife of *Abraham*; be that as it will, I ſay not with *Philoxenus*, what they are; but with *Sophocles*, what they ought to be. I muſt freely own, that I can never approve of thoſe women who take upon them to diſturb a family, like *Xantippe* † the wife of *Socrates*, and who delight in nothing more than diſorder and confuſion. They will not always meet with philoſophers like him; there may be thoſe who will correct their ill humour ſomewhat more roughly, and will not make uſe of a civil lecture to appeaſe their fury. But how terrible is ſuch converſation! ſurely *Alphonſus* was right, in ſaying that *to make the marriage-ſtate happy, the husband muſt be deaf and the wife blind*; if women ought ſometimes to ſhut their eyes upon the actions of their huſbands for fear of being jealous, the men are oblig'd ſometimes to ſtop their ears againſt the clamour and reproaches of their wives.

* Tobit i. 14. ii. 1. x. 7.

† See *Plutarch* on profit from enemies.

But

But after all, I mean not hereby that the men ſhould become tyrants, or that the obedience of their wives ſhould make them inſolent; devoir muſt be reciprocal; if it be not reciprocal, it is imperfect and even unjuſt. The manner of creating the firſt woman teſtifieth this; ſhe was not taken from the feet or from the head but from the ſide, to ſhew that ſhe was deſign'd not for a ſlave or miſtreſs, but for an agreeable companion.

CHAP. V.

Of TRUE *and* FALSE PROBITY.

THERE is nothing ſo pernicious as falſe probity; it teaches hypocriſy in devotion, treachery in friendſhip, and perfidiouſneſs in all manner of converſation. Women have ſometimes been accuſed of having an inclination thereto, as if they knew how to maſk their actions as well as their faces, and could paint goodneſs as well as beauty; but indeed if there have been ſome ſuch diſſemblers, others ſurely have been ſincerely honeſt; and experience ſufficiently ſhews, that their natural diſpoſition is as capable of an honeſt ſimplicity as of artifice and cunning. Be this as it will, their innocence ſtands not in need of any apology from me; and I think it will be enough, in order to make this diſcourſe uſeful,

to ſhew the marks of falſe probity, and to point out ſome remedies that they may know the means of diſcovering it in others, and correcting it in themſelves, and learn, not to deceive, nor to be deceiv'd.

But indeed as important as this is, it is a very difficult leſſon; becauſe there are thoſe who carry ſuch an appearance of goodneſs, that it would be thought a crime to have the leaſt ſuſpicion of their virtue, and yet it ſometimes ſo happens, that they have the heart of a Fury under the countenance of a *Siren*, the face of a *Lucretia* and the life of a *Meſſalina*, the manners of a proſtitute under the mien of a ſaint. This then is one of the moſt viſible marks of falſe probity; becauſe there is no doubt but that it always affects a more glaring appearance than true probity; we may ſay the ſame of falſe virtue, that we did of falſe friendſhip; that by making ſo great an eclat and uſing ſo much affectation, they both alike become ſuſpected by every honeſt man.

The ſentiment of *Ariſtotle* ſeems admirable, when he ſays, that *we may know falſe probity as we do falſe money; as the gold that glitters moſt is not the beſt, the actions that make the moſt ſhew of goodneſs are not always the moſt virtuous.* As the devil, the patron and example of all hypocrites, transforms himſelf to an angel of light, ſuch his diſciples do the ſame, often borrowing the viſage of virtue to gain reception for vice; they

they deſire to make their appearance in all public places; they can do nothing without witneſſes; when they pray, they are loud; what alms they give, they give *openly in the ſtreets*; and when they faſt, they are *of a ſad countenance and diſfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to faſt* *: In ſhort, all ſuch are mere players, who ſtudy to appear what they are not; had they no ſpectators, we may ſuppoſe they would not look and act ſo cautiouſly as on a ſtage.

Falſe probity knows the moſt refined and ſubtle part in devotion, it is learned and eloquent, it hath many mouths but no hands, it can ſpeak well but does not practiſe; it teaches the means of ſalvation, but walks in the way of perdition; it touches the croſs, but will not carry it; it makes bitter cries, and yet is not penitent. In ſhort, all this grand appearance is only the ſign of falſhood; bad deſigns ſtand in need of the faireſt maſk. The *Trojan* horſe, big with enemies, was dedicated to the goddeſs *Minerva* †: And that infamous queen ‡, of whom the ſcripture ſpeaks, commanded her people to keep a faſt when ſhe deſigned to commit murder.

But in order to diſcover this diſſimulation we muſt obſerve, that as falſe probity ſheweth ex-

* Matt. vi. 2, 16.
† Virg. Æn. ii. 230.
‡ Jezabel. 1 Kings xxi. 9.

ceſs in embracing virtue, it likewiſe does the ſame in ſhunning vice; it counterfeits both love and hatred; it will appear ſcrupulous, but it is only outward while it harbours a licentious ſoul. *Plutarch* * ſaith, that *as the ſoul of a libertine imagines there is no God, the ſcrupulous and preciſe wou'd fain have it ſo; what the one thinks, the other deſires*; if this be ſo, what muſt we ſay of thoſe who are intirely libertines within, and only ſcrupulous in appearance; or rather who affect preciſeneſs, only to take the greater liberties?

Of what a different religion are their heart and face! the one is a devotee, while the other is an atheiſt; the one weeps, while the other jeſts; they condemn others for a ſcratch, while their own will is guilty of a thouſand murders. They are ſcrupulous of an honeſt freedom, and yet give themſelves up to riot and exceſs; without a witneſs they have neither dread of ſin nor love of virtue. Women, who profeſs true probity, have I know not what more freedom in their behaviour; their actions are leſs conſtrained and more genuine; they appear truly what they are, whereas the other employ all their art and ſtudy to appear what they are not, or more than they are. I own, as I have ſaid elſewhere, that ſome may be ſcrupulous through ignorance, as well as by deſign; and that as theſe are to be blamed, the other are to

* In his diſcourſe on *ſuperſtition*.

be

be pitied: But there is a great deal of difference herein, becauſe they who are ſo by ſimplicity are eaſy and well content to be told of their error; whereas they who are ſo by deſign are altogether deſperate when their hypocriſy is diſcover'd.

And here we may paſs on to the third mark of falſe probity; becauſe they who are addicted thereto fear nothing more than to ſtand corrected, there is no difference between reproving and vexing an hypocrite; as they who ſeek vain-glory love not reproof, they who love truth cannot hate it. Falſe probity is humble, provided it be not rebuked; it is patient, when not croſs'd by any accident; it is cowardly and proud; it hath no more courage to bear a misfortune than modeſty to bear a rebuke. This falſe money cannot bear the fire or the coppel; it is not proof againſt either pain or truth. Nor is falſe probity more capable of giving reproof than of receiving it; it is neither humble herein, nor charitable. This is the very touchſtone whereby to know true from falſe virtue in women; they who are really good love reproof when juſtly merited; they who are ſo only in appearance, hate and deſpiſe it; they are enemies to every thing that tends to take off the mask; becauſe they ſeek not inſtruction of the mind, but only the approbation of the world; they prefer opinion to the rectitude of conſcience.

Theſe then are the ſigns of falſe probity; there are ſome other indeed, but theſe are the principal. Hypocrites are all outſide; they appear ſcrupulous and preciſe; they cannot bear correction and reproof. There are alſo ſome who pretend they can diſcover the ſigns of a bad heart, or of goodneſs in the countenance; and that, by underſtanding the rules of phyſiognomy, they want nothing more than the outward mien alone, to judge of truth from the appearance: And tho' the countenance, ſay they, may ſometimes deceive, as in the caſe of *Socrates*, who was a man of the ſtricteſt integrity and honour, tho' his face ſpoke the contrary; this is ſo very rare, that in general they conclude the countenance diſcovers ſomewhat of our paſſions, and the front is as it were the picture of the ſoul.

But having ſhewn the means of diſcovering this hypocritical diſſimulation, let us come to ſomething more important, the means of remedying the ſame. There is nothing better, in order to conceive horror at it, than to conſider how unjuſt and dangerous falſe probity is; that it is contrary to reaſon, to ſociety, to courage, to virtue, to conſcience. It is contrary to reaſon or the light of nature, becauſe in proportion to what ſhare of reaſon we have we ought to have the more ſincerity; and as the ſun diſſipates the dark ſhades of night, a good diſpoſition will baniſh all diſguiſe, and not trouble itſelf with ſo many vain artifices.

It

It is contrary to ſociety and converſation, becauſe by teaching never to appear what we are nor to ſpeak what we think, it follows, that we muſt not expect fidelity in friendſhip, truth in diſcourſe, nor ſecurity in the affairs of life. It is contrary to courage, becauſe there is as much mean-ſpiritedneſs as ſupple cunning in all this conſtraint; this diſſimulation is ſtrangely baſhful; it is contrary to virtue itſelf, becauſe falſe probity taking upon itſelf the appearance of true, we cannot well diſcern the one from the other; and becauſe it gives too light a recompenſe to virtue, feeding itſelf only with vain-glory, and ſeeking from the hands of men what is not to be receiv'd but from the hands of God.

Laſtly, It is contrary to the repoſe of conſcience, becauſe we are at greater pains to put on an appearance than truth itſelf would coſt; and to live in this manner, is properly going to the ſhades below by the way of paradiſe. Shameful blindneſs! of what uſe is it to have the approbation of the world, while remorſe tyrannizeth within? What avails it to enjoy pleaſures only in idea, and be tortur'd in reality? In ſhort, of what ſervice is it in the end for women to conceal their deſigns of vain-glory, under an head cover'd with duſt and aſhes? To ſhew a mortified countenance while the ſoul is puffed up with pride, and to be holy in the ſight of men, but highly criminal in the ſight of God? Let them feign what they will, they will always

at laſt find, that it is with a good conſcience as with a good face, the one needs no paint, and the other no diſguiſe.

After all, to ſtrike a juſt terror into thoſe who endeavour to diſguiſe their actions, and who chooſe rather to appear virtuous than to be ſo, I think it is enough to mention the ſole example of *Brunehault*, whom *Clotharius* condemn'd to be drawn at an horſe's tail, and ſo torn in pieces, and puniſh'd in public view by a death very grievous and tragical. *Belle-Foreſt* ſays, that *this queen appear'd very devout in the eyes of many, and nevertheleſs with all this ſhew of piety, ſhe was the cauſe of more deaths than an hundred battles; ſhe affected*, ſays he, *the converſation of the moſt holy perſonages, and yet was ſo cruel as to kill her ſon and nephews: She founded ſo many monaſteries that it is almoſt incredible, and yet took pleaſure in fomenting treaſons, and raiſing ſeditions among all her neighbours, nay in murdering the moſt innocent and juſt of her own kingdom.* Never was a woman ſo good in all appearance and ſo bad in fact; and therefore if we may credit what many have wrote of her, ſhe was the true image of falſe probity. I know that *Æmilius* and others have juſtified this princeſs, and that they attribute all the evil that hath been ſaid of her to the envy of thoſe who will allow no merit to a foreigner; but whether ſhe was really bad, or only unhappy I pretend not to determine; I

have

have only ſaid of her what I found in hiſtory*.

CHAP. VI.

Of SOLITUDE *and* QUIETNESS *of* MIND.

HAVING ſhewn what women ought to be with regard to others, it is neceſſary to conſider the duty they owe themſelves; it is nothing to know what they muſt do to make their converſation agreeable, if they know not what is requiſite to make their lives happy. Concerning this matter therefore we may ſay to them what an eminent perſon wrote to the emperor *Conſtantine*, that the two moſt deſirable good things of life are a clear reputation and a ſound conſcience, becauſe there is nothing that more generally makes life diſagreeable than infamy and inquietude. Conſcience depends intirely upon ourſelves, reputation not ſo much; the former is founded on innocence and virtue, the latter very often on accidents. Reputation makes us happy among

* She was the daughter of king *Athanagild*, and married *Sigebert* I. *A. D.* 568. and was the mother of *Childebert* II. ſhe is commended by St. *Gregory* the great, St. *Germain* of *Paris*, and others. She was executed *A. D.* 614. There are ſome verſes on her death by *Ronſard*; but they are not worth recital.

others, conſcience makes us happy in ourſelves; our honour depends upon the opinion that others have of us, our tranquillity upon the opinion that we have of ourſelves.

We may eaſily judge from hence of the importance of conſcience, ſeeing that it either gives or deprives us of all true content, and that tho' we had ever ſo great reputation one ſingle ſting of conſcience would make us wretched and diſturb the tranquillity of the ſoul; ſo that peace of mind depends intirely upon the purity of conſcience. To the enjoying a tranquil ſoul there is nothing more requiſite than innocence. And ſurely this is very juſt, becauſe at leaſt our felicity depends upon ourſelves; there is no perſon but may be content; our happineſs is attached to our liberty; it is in our own power to make life eaſy or burdenſom. How neceſſary therefore is it for women to enjoy this inward peace, or what point in morality can be of greater importance? But to ſhew more plainly what can preſerve or diſturb this tranquillity, I cannot help thinking that as it is not eaſy long to enjoy health in a time of peſtilence, ſo it is very difficult to be at reſt amidſt the noiſe and diſtraction of the world. It is almoſt impoſſible to be at eaſe in a croud; as we ſeldom ſee the fruit of trees that grow by the way-ſide come to be ripe, becauſe the people paſſing by not only gather it before the ſeaſon, but pluck off the leaves and break the boughs, ſo it is difficult

cult to bring our intentions however good they are to perfection in the throng of the world, becauſe there are ſo many occaſions that trouble us, and ſo many objects to tempt our integrity. We conceive good things but bring them not forth; the beſt reſolutions die in us without effect, and moſt of them are ſtifled in their birth. They that have been at a ſermon will from thence go to a play; they are angels in the morning, and in the evening devils; it is very difficult either to be long virtuous or content; therefore there are a thouſand accidents that either diſturb or corrupt us.

I grant however that even in ſolitude there is danger, and that, in ſpite of ourſelves, fancy will preſent the ſight with unſeemly objects, and ſolicit the mind with evil thoughts: I grant that even in flying from the world we may ſometimes carry our paſſions along with us; but after all we muſt confeſs that our peril is not ſo great in ſolitude, nor are evil thoughts ſo frequent here or dangerous; they are juſt born, and live not; they are the flaſhes of vanity that appear and diſappear in a moment; and when any reflexion importunes, it is much eaſier to throw it off here than amidſt the preſs of the world. The picture of an enemy cannot hurt us like an enemy himſelf; here the world can only tempt us with the image of an object, but in company it preſents the objects themſelves. A painted ſun ſcorcheth us not like that in the heavens,

nor

nor do we fear the venom of ſerpents or the point of a drawn ſword in a picture. It is eaſier to defend ourſelves from an evil that is a mere phantom than from a real one; the preſence of our enemies affects us more than their ſhadow; on ſeeing a painted ſea we are not terrified as at the wrecks we ſee floating on the ocean itſelf.

There is leſs peril therefore in ſolitude; there is leſs danger of being corrupted by the objects that pleaſe us, or troubled by thoſe that pleaſe us not. But ſuppoſe that virtuous perſons and ſuch as are conſtantly inclined to good, may ſtill preſerve the purity of their conſcience amidſt the company of the world, yet at leaſt they find it difficult to maintain a tranquil ſpirit; if they are not corrupted, they are however perſecuted, nor without much pains can they gain a victory; if they eſcape ſhipwreck, they cannot help being toſſed with the ſtorm.

What uneaſineſs muſt they ſuffer in ſome companies! what patience muſt they have to bear the rudeneſs and impertinence of ſeveral they meet with! *Montagne*, I think, had good reaſon to ſay, that *was it put to his choice to be always alone or never, he would have choſe to live always in ſolitude rather than always in company; becauſe it is a leſs evil to renounce the converſation of ſome honeſt and good men, than to be inceſſantly diſturbed with that of the impertinent and troubleſom* *.

* Eſſays, lib. ii. chap. 8.

Be

Be this as it will, we may juſtly call ſolitude a paradiſe, ſeeing that it inſpires good thoughts; it gives us reſt and delight, and in ſome meaſure fits us for communion with God himſelf; yet, as even this may be abuſed, I praiſe not all ſorts of ſolitude. Of ſolitary perſons ſome are barbarous, and ſome contemplative; there is a ſolitude which ariſeth from miſanthropy, and is indeed brutal; there is another ſort which only ſeeketh reſt to the ſoul, and this is divine; this is the only one I am ſpeaking of, it being that which greatly contributes to the tranquillity of the mind.

Beſides, I freely own that it avails us nothing to eſtrange ourſelves from company, if at the ſame time we forſake not our paſſions; it avails nothing to live in the ſilence of the moſt retired groves, if fear or deſires ſtill diſturb the ſoul; and that it is not true ſolitude, however remote from any noiſe, if we are ſtill peſter'd with a croud of evil thoughts. It is not enough therefore for women to be all alone, to enjoy true ſolitude; to have the mind at eaſe, there is no better way than to make themſelves miſtreſſes of their affections, inſtead of being ſlaves to them. Without this, let them fly company as they will they cannot fly from inquietude; and let them think as they pleaſe, they can never enjoy at the ſame time a mind eaſy and paſſionate; and yet it is ſhameful to ſee how few there are, that take the right method of living in tranquil-

tranquillity; there is nothing they desire more or seek less; all the world wish to live at ease, yet scarce any one takes the way to arrive thereat.

Alas! how many are there who discompose themselves with gaiety of heart, who trouble themselves with what concerns them not, who employ their will in many matters wherein they ought only to use their judgment; who are altogether profuse in their desires, their cares and their pity! I mean not by this, that to be without inquietude they must be without thought; to be at rest is not to be without action, but without passion; there is a great deal of difference between tranquillity and idleness: Neither do I desire, that to be without care they should be without charity; I approve not of that tranquillity, in which neither religion nor reason bear a part.

There are extremes herein, which I hold to be vitious; it would be both scandalous and criminal, if to be at ease we must be cruel or stupid; there are but too many, as I have said elsewhere, whose ignorance is of service to them herein, and who would have less ease had they more knowledge. As the lower as well as the higher region of the air is free from tempests, and the middle region only subject to storms; so I think they are the middle sort of minds, that find the greatest difficulty to enjoy a calm. Great minds are above affliction, little minds

are

are below it; the one is ignorant of what the other ſurmounts. But indeed many are of ſuch a diſpoſition, as to employ it wholly in doing themſelves harm; they are not ſubtle, but to make themſelves more wretched; and if we examine well their imprudence, we ſhall find that they have no invention but what tends to diſturb their own tranquillity: If they poſſeſs any good, they regard it not; if any evil happens to them, their whole attention is taken up with reflecting upon their miſery; they retain the evil, but let the good eſcape them.

Pauſanias very juſtly obſerv'd, that *there is nothing of more miſchievous conſequence to women than* deſire *and* fear; and that as *they are naturally more inclined to theſe two paſſions, ſo there is nothing that gives them more uneaſineſs or oftner diſturbs the quietneſs of their mind:* And indeed the moſt frequent cauſe of their inquietude is, that they ſeldom or never regard the better part in their condition, but only the worſe; and on the other hand, in looking upon others they conſider not wherein they are miſerable, but only wherein they are happy; they ſee not their own good fortune, nor the bad of others. How does this error rack the ſoul of many? They that live apart from the great world are ambitious to converſe with thoſe about the court; on the contrary the courtiers, under their daily fatigue, think no life ſo happy as a country life. Envy ſometimes caſts down the eyes as well

well as lifts them up; thoſe of a middle fortune wiſh for the pomp of princeſſes, and theſe on the contrary would be glad to enjoy the ſweet reſt and tranquillity of peaſants. Some complain that beauty ſubjects them to troubleſom importunities, others that uglineſs makes them deſpiſed; they either accuſe fortune or nature; and thus it is, that by deſiring what is good in the condition of others, they never think of their own: Thus it is, they are enemies to their own eaſe; and that, if they would but employ as much care in ſeeking true tranquillity, as they do in flying from it, many would enjoy a life of as much eaſe and content, as it is now diſſatisfying and miſerable.

CHAP. VII.

Of the CONTEMPT *and* FEAR *of* DEATH.

THERE are few perſons, who completely finiſh life before they die; there are few women, who can truly ſay with the queen of *Carthage* when dying,

*I've liv'd, I've run the deſtin'd courſe of fate**.

We diſturb life with the fear of death, or death with the regret of life; we go not to the tomb, but are dragged thither; we run not from this world, but are hunted from it; we are commonly

* Virg. Æn. iv. 653.

monly guilty either of raſhneſs in contemning death, or cowardice in fearing it.

There are few who know how to preſerve a juſt mean herein; ſome women deſpiſe it too much, others too little; ſome are too much in love with life, others not enough: On this occaſion therefore, more than ever, we may know whether they are truly wiſe or not; in this conſiſts all the difficulty and all the glory of philoſophy. In other reſpects they may act the player, but here they muſt ſpeak for themſelves, and appear without diſguiſe. The better to examine what abuſe there may be either in ſeeking death, or flying from it, I ſhall firſt ſhew what reaſons there may be to make it worthy our fear, and afterwards why it is rather to be treated with contempt.

Whatever reaſon there may be for deſiring death, is there not enough to make it void? Seeing that life is good, death muſt needs be an evil. If this was of as little importance as life, God would not ſo highly eſteem the ſacrifice that is made him by martyrdom; if death was of more value than life, there would be more reaſon to reward murderers than to puniſh them. As life is given us, not for us to deſtroy but to preſerve it, we ought to deſire the continuation of it, and fear the end. If evil be the object of fear, we have reaſon to fear death; ſince it not only deprives us of a great good, but of that which is the foundation

of

of all other. Beſides, if all the world owns that it requires courage to reſolve on ſuffering death, we muſt likewiſe own that death is worthy our fear; or otherwiſe it could not ſerve for an object of reſolution and ſtrength of mind; no one can be bold or courageous in diſpoſing himſelf for, or reſolving upon what would give him pleaſure.

In ſhort there is a marriage ſo natural between the two parties, in whoſe union conſiſts life, that even when ſeparated they ſtill retain a deſire to be re-united; the ſouls that are in heaven, have ſtill an inclination to return to the bodies they once animated; and in waiting this return their glory ſeems not yet accompliſhed. Indeed this alliance is ſo cloſe, that the ſaints themſelves have found their deſires divided between *grace* and *nature*; when the love of heaven hath made them wiſh for the union of their ſoul with God; the love of life hath made them dread the ſeparation of ſoul and body.

Thus then is death to be feared; let us now conſider why we ſhould contemn it. What reaſon is there to fear an end of this life, if we believe that a life ſo infinitely happy will ſucceed it? Eſpecially, if by ceaſing to live in this world we ceaſe to be wretched, we break our chains and eſcape from priſon; for does not death give liberty to the ſoul, when it ſeparates it from the groſſer body, and exempts it from

from all the pains and maladies to which it is ſubject while bound thereto? During this life the ſoul is in a captivity, which is not only burdenſom to it, but even diſgraceful; by reaſon of this union with matter, it is diſturb'd with ſo many infamous paſſions, it trembles with fear, is inflamed with deſire, it ſuffers grievous pains, is ſubject to the injuries of the elements, and the malign influence of the ſtars: It muſt neceſſarily partake of all the inconveniences of this lower world, and live with the body, as a wife does with a bad husband, whoſe imperfections and abſurdities ſhe is obliged to endure patiently.

But further, tho' death be full of darkneſs it reſtores light to us; tho' it cloſeth our bodily eyes, it takes off the bandage from thoſe of the ſoul, which can ſee and know nothing clearly in this life, which is often deceived here by the falſe report of the ſenſes, which cannot in this ſtate judge of the ſubſtance that lies conceal'd under the veil of accidents, which ſees but darkly as through a glaſs the bleſſed objects of its hope, and which cannot but have a falſe image and ſtrange repreſentation of itſelf: It is herein like the poet's *Io* *, who being changed into a cow, look'd in vain into the fountains to ſee her beauty, where ſhe ſaw not herſelf in the form of a damſel, but only in the rough hide of a beaſt.

* Ovid. Met. i. 568.

All

All this is nothing, the philoſophy of chriſtians goes much farther in this reſpect than that of idolaters; as it hath more light, it hath more courage; and as it hath better promiſes, it hath ſtronger hopes: In truth the fear of death comes often from a bad cauſe; it comes from our forgetfulneſs of immortality; it comes from either infidelity or ignorance. How can they who believe heaven to be full of all delights be afraid to go thither? We do not know how to compare the evils of this life with the good things of the other, and therefore fail either in memory or belief.

In a word, to what purpoſe ſerves this fear of death but to anticipate and advance death itſelf? Muſt we not own that it is more natural than reaſonable or profitable? That it makes us run into evil inſtead of avoiding it? As hope makes us enjoy as it were good before it comes, fear expoſeth us to evil before it really ſtrikes us: The one ſatisfies us with the bare proſpect of good, the other perſecutes us with that of evil; theſe two paſſions play upon us differently, the one with threatnings, the other with promiſes: So that in proportion as we hope to live, we fear to die; the apprehenſion of death comes only from an exceſſive love of life. What ſtrange confuſion! we are afraid of every thing, as if we were to die every moment; we deſire every thing, as if we were to live always. The ſource of this error is example

with

with old people; and with the young, the time of age: But ſince the old cannot live much longer, and the young may ſoon die, is it not better to diſpoſe ourſelves for death, by preparing for and contemning it, than by being too much in love with life, to build an eternity on a foundation of ſand?

To ſpeak freely: Are there not very few who think they ſhall die of old age? Are there any ſo aged, who do not believe they ſhall live another year? Who is there, that thinks he ſhall die by defailure of ſtrength? That he ſhall end with the bounds that nature hath ſet to life? Are there any bounds, which we hope not to paſs? Indeed we never finiſh life according to our own reckoning; we ſtill expect another hour, when the laſt is run. Thus then doth the fear of death abuſe us; our hopes laſt as long as our deſires; and as we deſire always to live, we always hope ſo to do.

But there is another ſort of error; there are ſome who own that death is not ſo terrible in itſelf, as upon the account of its uncertainty, and that were they aſſured of his coming, they ſhould rather meet him, than fly from him; they ſhould often think of him, inſtead of forgetting him. But ſurely this is a weak reaſon; for if nothing elſe troubled them it would be eaſy to prevent this by a due preparation, ſo that they never could be ſurpriſed. When we know not where death expects us, cannot we every

every where expect him? Death ſurpriſeth not ſuch as are ſo diſpoſed; he ſurpriſeth not thoſe who look for his coming; by our readineſs we prevent death from ever being violent, and by our preparation from its being ſudden.

I know not how therefore to excuſe thoſe women, who cannot endure that we ſhould ever ſpeak to them of death; who think they do enough to forget it, that they may not fear it, and therefore dread it not, becauſe they never think of it. They would ſurely bluſh, if they conſider'd that they owe all their reſolution herein to forgetfulneſs; that it is not courage to ſhut their eyes for fear of being terrified at the ſight of their enemy. This is not to defend themſelves, but to ſuffer him to ſtrike them in the dark; and that this is not to be more bold, but more blind and ignorant; it would be much better to employ their meditations thereon, and to accuſtom themſelves to his image, that they may deſpiſe him when he comes himſelf.

But what need is there of ſo many reaſons to perſuade women to the contempt of death? Why will they not do for virtue's ſake what many have done by mere paſſion? If for a little diſguſt, a ſmall vexation, or a ſlight misfortune ſome have run too haſtily to meet death, why ſhould they fly from it on good occaſions, and when they ought to teſtify their conſtancy and courage? But not to deny them the praiſes that are

are due, I muſt own, the little I have read in hiſtory, is adorn'd with the reſolution of thoſe who have been more afraid of ſin than of death, who choſe rather to loſe their life than their honour or innocence; and who freely expoſed it for their parents, their husbands, their country, and their religion *.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the true SCIENCE *for an accompliſh'd* WOMAN.

AMONG all the human ſciences none ſeem of more importance than phyſic, law, and morality: Phyſic is neceſſary, as it regards the conſtitution of the body and the preſervation of life; law, as it is concern'd in the adminiſtration of affairs, which could not otherwiſe be carried on in the world; but morality more ſo, as it is employ'd in the conduct of the mind, and for its object hath vice and virtue; and yet this is what is ſtudied with the leaſt earneſtneſs, and perſued with the ſlighteſt application. There are public ſchools

* The Author here ended his ſecond part; but finding that his ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN ſtill wanted ſomething with regard to *Chriſtian Morals*, he was pleas'd to add the following diſcourſes; for which, I think, ſhe owes him a greater obligation than for all the excellent inſtructions before given. See the *Preface*.

for

for the former two, and in order to attain the knowledge of them no time is thought long, no labour ſpared; whereas morality ſeems univerſally neglected, and can ſcarce find either maſters or ſcholars. It is nevertheleſs as much more noble and more uſeful than either law or phyſic; as it is more dangerous to be infected with the maladies of the ſoul than with thoſe of the body, and as virtue is incomparably above health or fortune. In truth it not only ſurpaſſeth the other two, but ſeems itſelf in ſome meaſure to contain them; we may even ſay, they are the branches of this trunk and the rivers of this ſpring; for were we to live up to the ſtrict rules of morality, judges and phyſicians would be almoſt ſuperfluous; were we to follow the laws of temperance and of right reaſon, we ſhould not have ſo many complaints on unpalatable medicines and expenſive lawſuits; there would be fewer diſeaſes and leſs wretchedneſs. This our ſcience can both heal and keep order; it hath laws and remedies, puniſhments and rewards, and was therefore the only ſtudy of the ancient philoſophers. *Plutarch* aſſures us, that *the* ſeven wiſe men *of* Greece * *devoted themſelves to the knowledge of* manners, *and that* Thales *was the only one who ſtudied any thing elſe but* morality; this is the

* *Periander, Solon, Bias, Thales, Cleobulus, Pittacus, Chilon.* They were properly but five; *Cleobulus* and *Periander* uſurped the title. See *Plutarch* on *Ei* at *Delphi*, and in the life of *Solon.*

true

true ſchool of active wiſdom. If other parts of philoſophy give a mouth to reaſon, this gives her hands; it finiſhes the man, and we may juſtly ſay that if reaſon is *natural morality* but defective, *morality* is reaſon acquired and more perfect.

Let not any one after this ſhew himſelf ſo ſelf-opinionated, as to deny its being equally neceſſary to both ſexes; or ſay that if men are wrong in not ſtudying it enough, women are more ſo in ſtudying it at all: Since women are oblig'd as much as men to know the difference of good and evil, and to live according to the rules of right reaſon; ſince, I ſay, they ought to aſpire to the ſame perfection and to the ſame felicity; ſince they have the ſame laws to follow, the ſame maladies to be healed, and the ſame ſoul to be inſtructed.

I ſhall not do here as many do, who in ſpeaking or writing in the perſuaſive ſtile, reſerve their ſtrongeſt arguments for the laſt; but ſhall exhibit mine in the beginning, to ſhew that if it is tyranny in us to debar women this ſcience, it is meanneſs in them to renounce it, and deprive themſelves of ſo valuable a good for fear of breaking a bad cuſtom; to ſhew, I ſay, that as they have the ſame need of moral virtues, and no leſs an inclination thereto, we do wrong in demanding the practice of what we deny them the proper means of knowing.

And who can doubt that the virtue of women is the ſame with that of men? *What difference,*

ference, ſaith Plutarch, *is there between the prudence of* Tanaquil *and that of* Servius *? Was it not the ſame magnanimity that inſpired both *Brutus* and *Porcia* †? Or was the generoſity of *Pelopidas* ‡ contrary to that of *Timoclea* ‖? If in any thing they are not altogether alike either from a diverſity of intention or complexion, this difference makes no change in the ſort of virtue, any more than the difference of countenances in that of men; nor is there any more difference between the virtue of men and that of women, than between the virtue of women themſelves. *Irene* ** lov'd her husband, but not in like manner as *Alceſtis* †† lov'd *Admetus*. *Cornelia* was not ſo magnanimous as *Olympias* ‡‡, nor *Zenobia* ‖‖ as *Penelope*. We may ſay the ſame of men; *Cato* was juſt,

* *Tanaquil*, wife of *Tarquinius Priſcus*, the fifth king of the *Romans*, *A. M.* 3335. *Servius Tullius* his ſucceſſor, *A. M.* 3373. See *Plutarch* on the fortune of the *Romans*.

† The wife of *Brutus* and daughter to *Cato*. See *Plutarch*'s life of *Brutus*.

‡ A brave captain the ſon of *Hippoclus* of *Thebes*, and friend of *Epaminondas*. See his life in *Plutarch*.

‖ A lady of noble parentage, ſiſter of *Theagenes* the *Theban*. See *Plutarch* on the virtues of women, and in the life of *Alexander*.

** An *Athenian*; the wife of *Leo* IV. emperor, *A. D.* 775.

†† She died to ſave her huſband. See *Eurip. Alceſti. Ovid. de Arte Amandi*, lib. iii. 20. Juv. vi. 652.

‡‡ *Olympias*, the wife of *Philip* of *Macedon* and mother to *Alexander*. See *Plutarch* in the life of *Alexander*; and in his morals *on conjugal precepts*.

‖‖ The wife of *Odenatus* king of *Palmyra* in *Syria*.

but

but not after the ſame manner as *Ageſilaus* ‖‖; there was a difference in the prudence of *Neſtor* and that of *Ulyſſes*, as in valour between *Achilles* and *Ajax*; and yet ſhall we ſay there are more virtues than one, of juſtice, of prudence, or of valour? Theſe ſlight differences change not the eſſence of the virtue, but only its appearance; it is the ſame virtue under other habits, and in different circumſtances. As nature gives the ſame light to men as to women, art teaches them the ſame morality; reaſon and virtue are of two ſexes, tho' of the ſame ſpecies; nor can women renounce this ſcience without renouncing a privilege and an advantage, which in right of their birth they have in common with men.

We may reaſon in the ſame manner concerning the paſſions, as the virtues, and ſhew that as women are ſubject to the ſame maladies they are capable of the ſame cure; for what difference is there between the inceſt of *Biblis* for *Caunus* *, and that of *Antiochus* for *Stratonicè* †? Had not *Procris* the ſame jealouſy of her huſband, as *Cyanippus* ‡ of his wife? And who can ſay there was any difference in the deſperation of *Nero* and *Meſſalina*, when they both became

‖‖ An *Athenian* the brother of *Themiſtocles*. See *Plutarch's Laconic Apothegms*.

* Her brother, Ovid. Met. lib. ix. ver. 454.

† His mother in-law, wife of *Seleucus*, who reſign'd her to his ſon to ſave his life. See *Plutarch* in the life of *Demetrius*.

‡ The *Theſſalian*. See *Plutarch's* parallels of *Greeks* and *Romans*.

ſo abandon'd as to find no one that would aſſiſt them either living or dying? We muſt not think there is other virtue or other vice for women, any more than there are other puniſhments or other laws; they have, no doubt, the ſame enemies to contend with, and the ſame ſhipwrecks to avoid. Ought they not therefore to know the art of ſailing and conquering as well as men, eſpecially as it is within themſelves that theſe ſtorms ariſe and theſe ſeditions are fomented? Will any one ſay that, weak as they are, they have help at hand, and there are wiſe men, whom they may conſult for their defence and for their conduct? Muſt they then, in every moment of paſſion or inquietude, go look for a philoſopher? Muſt they be oblig'd to borrow a good, which they may find in their own breaſt, without having recourſe to others, provided they are permitted to prepare themſelves by means of this ſcience? In ſhort, muſt they walk by the light of flambeaux, when they might enjoy mid-day as well as the learned, and be illumined with the ſource of light? Indeed it is a ſhameful dependence to be always under guides for fear of going aſtray, guides, who are ſometimes more blind than thoſe whom they pretend to conduct, and at leaſt are troubleſom, if they lead them not out of the way; would it not be better for them to know the art of curing themſelves than to receive medicine from the hand of others? Let us confeſs the truth, the remedies that are preſcrib'd them are

not

not only diſagreeable but dangerous; for as in diſeaſes of the body the phyſicians themſelves muſt ſubmit to the advice of others; on the contrary, in thoſe of the ſoul no preſcription whatever can be ſo proper as our own; if there is danger of miſtaking our own caſe in a fever, there is much more in receiving the opinion of others with regard to an irregular paſſion.

As no perſon can ſee clearly into our ſoul, we can have no dependence upon foreign aid; none but ourſelves alone can honeſtly calm this internal tempeſt; none but ourſelves can oppoſe an enemy who is out of the ſight as well as the reach of others; the hand can no more reach the bottom of the ſoul than the eye. The caſe is often ſuch here, that we muſt contend alone without any friend to comfort or aſſiſt us; it is here, I ſay, that the vices or paſſions act like thieves, who when they have entred an houſe make it faſt to prevent any help from without.

What ſad diſtaſters happen from ignorance of morality! what ſhameful paſſions! In what danger are women, when they dare not tell their foible and know not how to conquer it! how is it poſſible not to be overcome, when they know no remedy, and are aſham'd to ſeek one; when they have not ſtrength enough to defend themſelves, nor courage to complain! how many have been loſt on this account, when otherwiſe their maladies were by no means incurable!

Had the infamous *Nictimene* * been well inſtructed in this our ſcience, ſhe had never given herſelf up to ſo vile a paſſion; morality would ſoon have ſtifled her flame, by oppoſing the deformity of her crime to the beauty that occaſion'd it. But what method did ſhe take? She applied not to a philoſopher but to her nurſe, who was more concerned to ſee her ſorrowful than vitious, and took more pains to oblige than to reform her.

It is impoſſible but that they ſhould yield even to the weakeſt of enemies, when the fear of asking relief is ſtronger than the deſire of receiving it; how ſeldom would they fail of victory, if they ſtudied manners! how content, how happy, and virtuous would they live! There is no caſe, in which morality will not give the means of repelling violence or preventing ſurpriſe. Whatever good advice they may happily receive, when they ſtand in need of it; if it be an happineſs to meet with good guides, it would ſurely be more to their honour not to want them.

Then would they have no occaſion to bluſh at the victory of their enemies, or the intimacy of their phyſicians; they would be more aſhamed of ſin than of the infamy that attends it; they would not prefer their reputation to their

* She fell in love with her father *Nicteus*, and for this crime was ſuppos'd to be turn'd into an owl. Ovid. Met. lib. ii. ver. 591.

innocence.

innocence. I know no better reaſon than this to oblige women to the ſtudy of this ſcience, nothing more powerful to perſuade them to learn the art of conquering their paſſions, than to repreſent to them the ſhame of a diſcovery; than to ſhew them, that the cure which they ſeek from others is irkſom on the account of dependence, or uncertain becauſe no one can truly know their malady, or dangerous becauſe they may poſſibly reveal it.

I deſign then not only to prove that this ſcience is as neceſſary to the fair ſex as to us, but that it is more ſo, on account of that natural baſhfulneſs which makes them more afraid than men of the diſcovery of any ſhameful intention. What can be more true, or what objections can the greateſt enemies to women and this ſcience raiſe againſt it? Will they ſay, that if they are aſhamed to ſpeak of their crimes they are not aſham'd to commit them? That their modeſty teſtifieth a greater averſion to penitence than to ſin, or that the ſame devil who takes away fear from them, when they are to commit ſin, gives it them back again when they have committed it, to hinder their repentance?

This is falſe and ſcandalous, deſerving rather chaſtiſement than an anſwer; I mean not here to make an apology for them: This is as far from my deſign, as they are from ſtanding in need of it, eſpecially as I ſhall ſubjoin a particular diſcourſe on the averſion they have or ought to

have for ſin; but I maintain, that naturally women are at as much pains to practiſe virtue as they have an inclination thereto, which ſhews that the ſtudy of morality is rather more requiſite for them than for men.

Since nature gives them not equal ſtrength for virtue, they muſt either be permitted to ſtudy it, or to ſin with impunity; in this the contradiction of ſlanderers ſtands confounded: They own this ſex the weaker, and yet think it ſtrange they ſhould acquire by art what nature denies them. They conſider not, that as to ſupport a ſickly conſtitution in life phyſic muſt uſe its utmoſt art, and have its due effect upon the body; ſo, to make a mind that is weak and eaſily borne down by ſin, ſteady in the practice of what is good, morality had need employ its ſtrongeſt reaſonings and moſt divine precepts.

There are ſome perſons of ſo happy a conſtitution, as to be at little or no pains to conquer vice; as there are fortreſſes which can defend themſelves without much trouble to guard them, by reaſon of their advantageous ſituation and the ſtrength of their walls. But as the places which are weak having neither ditch nor baſtions, have need to be well garriſon'd with ſoldiers, ſo perſons that have ſcarce any advantage from nature, ought well to fortify themſelves, and repair by ſtudy what the unhappineſs of birth hath left weak and unguarded.

And

And yet even they who own the fair ſex moſt infirm, permit them not to ſtudy nor ſeek a remedy for their weakneſs; they would have them as expert in goodneſs as men, tho' they have not like them the aſſiſtance of the ſciences nor the advantages of nature. They demand of them miraculous virtues; they blame them for loſing a victory, when they deny them the means to gain it; having taken from them all ſorts of antidote, they condemn inſtead of pitying them for being poiſoned. What can be more ridiculous or more unjuſt? They would have women paſs through the moſt dangerous ſeas, as it were upon an hurdle, and ſave themſelves in a ſtorm by floating on a plank, while they themſelves ſail not but in well-rigged veſſels, and have ſtudied all that is requiſite in the art of navigation.

All this reaſoning is founded upon the ſentiment of thoſe who accuſe women of having more inclination to evil than men; but this opinion is as falſe as it is injurious. We ought not to think that the ſtudy of morality is the more neceſſary for women, becauſe they are naturally more weak; weakneſs is common to both ſexes, as well as ignorance. Men have no more natural virtues or knowledge than women; it is as requiſite for the one as the other, to have them infuſed by grace or acquired by ſtudy. I am under no concern therefore to ſhew, that they are the more obliged

to ſtudy virtue, on account of any repugnancy thereto and the weakneſs of their ſex; I would by no means found this diſcourſe on the blame or invectives of ſlanderers, nor wound the fair ſex in order to cure them, nor decry their natural temper and diſpoſitions, in order to exalt the more their virtuous actions.

It is eaſy to draw their glory from another ſource; they would not merit the leſs honour in flying from vice, tho' naturally they have no leſs averſion to commit it than we pretend to; nor ſtand in leſs need of morality, with all the good inclinations they enjoy by birth. How little pains ſoever they may be at to ſubdue their paſſions, this ſcience of manners may ſtill be uſeful; they have daily enemies from without to contend with, tho' they have made peace with thoſe within. They are towns always under ſiege, which tho' free from domeſtic ſeditions and civil war, ought not therefore to live without alarm, ſince ſtrangers will continually attack them, from whom they ought to fear aſſaults and ſurpriſes.

Was morality of no avail to hinder our own inclination from tempting us, it may ſtill be neceſſary to prevent perſuaſion from deceiving us. Are there no evil ſeeds within, we muſt take care they be not there ſown, and that while the mind ſlumbers concupiſcence be not attack'd, as *Eve* was while *Adam* ſlept. We muſt take care that appearance ſeduceth us not, nor the objects

objects corrupt us either by their ſweetneſs, as hope or love; or by violence, as fear, hate, anger, and the like. Here then morality is of uſe, it is on this account abſolutely neceſſary for all women to give them light continually, and to animate them more in the perſuit of goodneſs and eſchewing evil, in proportion to their skill and knowledge.

Can this be denied? Or can it otherwiſe happen but that from this ſcience they will have a ſtronger confidence in the love of virtue and hatred of vice, as they more clearly ſee the deformity of the one and the beauty of the other. Who can fear any exceſs herein, or leſt women ſhould become too learned, except the ignorant and the vitious, who cannot endure a perſon ſhould either contradict or ſurpaſs them? Such as love not good things or know them not, are the only perſons who oppoſe the ſcience of living well, and approve not the learning an art, which to be ignorant of can be of no ſervice, nor in the knowledge of it is there any danger.

For granting that morality had no ſort of good in it, what harm can it do to women? Suppoſe it were not abſolutely neceſſary, either to ſubdue their paſſions within, or to reſiſt the ſweetneſs or violence of objects without; what peril can attend the knowledge of it? What grounds for any fear? Will women be more ſlaves to their paſſions, when they know them to be irregular motions

tions that disturb the interior faculties, and are not only enemies to virtue but altogether contrary to the tranquillity of the mind? Will they be more lightly stirred up to anger when they learn that it is a short fit of madness *, and that if the other passions disorder us, this quite blinds and transports us? Would they be less given to chastity, when they are taught that unhallowed love inspires a thousand irksom as well as shameful thoughts, and that such as are infected with it must be contented to live in inquietude and infamy?

Lastly, Can there be any danger in womens knowing there is a sovereign good, which is the end as well as the source of all other, and which the wise ought always to have in their mind for the rule of their actions, as the archer has his eye fix'd on the blank, when he lets fly his arrows? Can any one think, that what regulates the intentions of men corrupts those of women? Are their minds weaken'd by that which strengthens ours? Can we think they will learn vice in the very school of virtue? This is truly an unjust opinion, and quite contrary both to the good inclinaiton of women and the good effects of morality.

How should their better knowing the deformity of evil give them a stronger fancy thereto? Whatever some may think, this science can never be prejudicial to them; as the knowledge

* *Ira furor brevis est.* Hor. Epist. i. 2. 62.

of

of diſeaſes alters not the health of phyſicians, that of the paſſions diſturbs not the tranquillity of philoſophers. On the contrary, as we are not the leſs ſenſible of the acceſs and pain of the headach or of a fever, for not knowing the cauſe or the effects of them, nor leſs broken in pieces, for not ſeeing the rocks and ſhelves; ignorance in morality may not only not be uſeful, but altogether dangerous. I own that ſome advantage might be drawn from not knowing evil, provided that it always remained hid; and if, in ſpite of us, our irregular appetites ſhould not bring us to the knowledge of it. But certainly our nature is ſo corrupt, that although we muſt take a great deal of pains to ſtudy what is good, yet to learn what is not ſo, we have no need of either ſchool or college: Guides are neceſſary for our finding the right path, but not for our going aſtray.

God, ſays an holy father, *made the light, but* darkneſs *was neither by creation nor command.* As it came of itſelf therefore into the world there needs no art to give it entrance into the mind, but much is required to repel it thence; there muſt be a ſchool for the ſcience of virtue, but there needs none for vice. What then? Becauſe nature alone points out to us evil, muſt we employ no pains or ſtudy to know good? Becauſe the earth brings forth many ſuperfluous things, muſt we not till it and ſow good ſeed that it may produce what is uſeful and profitable

profitable for man? We muſt apply ourſelves therefore to this ſtudy, if we deſire to overcome the vitious and corrupt part of our nature. Women muſt learn this holy agriculture, if they intend to practiſe virtue with the utmoſt confidence and ſatisfaction.

I doubt not but ſome will here ſtart an objection againſt my manner of proving this ſcience neceſſary; there are many women, they will ſay, who have never ſtudied, and yet have liv'd diſcreetly, and been conſtantly virtuous. But I think there needs no great pains to anſwer them; they will ſoon ſee their error, if they will conſider the difference between thoſe who are good merely by conſtitution, and thoſe who add to this good inclination the ſeveral aids of ſcience and ſtudy. The virtue of the former is, as it were, trembling and uncertain; and we may judge from their practiſing it without skill, that it hath alſo leſs ſecurity, leſs contentment, and leſs honour.

Such as are good after this ſort are like thoſe who are placed in a fine ſeat or garden of pleaſure, but who have neither arms nor ſtrength to defend themſelves when any one would diſplace them. The firſt that attacks them eaſily deſpoils them of their poſſeſſions, and the leaſt violence turns them out; and indeed no one can well call us either ingenious or happy, if we know not that we are ſo ourſelves; we can never have felicity or skill without this reflection;

without

without it the learned are not firm in their opinion, nor the virtuous in their probity. The ſcience of manners therefore is abſolutely neceſſary to render our good inclinations more ſecure, and more ſtrongly to oblige us in the purſuit of good; for, no doubt, tho' ſome women may be virtuous without knowing the rules of morality, they would be ſo after another manner, were they well vers'd therein.

We may ſay of them the ſame that is ſaid of all ſuch as have excellent common ſenſe; *If they reaſon well from the mere light of nature, they would reaſon ſtill better by means of art and ſcience.* It is but an imperfect logic, which hath need of aid to do that with certainty which it only does by chance. And thus it is with the probity of women who know nothing; they as much deſerve our pity as our praiſe, ſince with morality they would be at leaſt in one degree more perfect; inſtead of common virtue it would then be heroic.

And here I muſt likewiſe anſwer thoſe who ſay, that knowledge prevents not women from being bad, any more than ignorance from being virtuous; and if they cannot contend with us by dint of argument, they will attack us with examples; they will tell us, for inſtance, of *Sappho* who had the reputation of being learned, and yet was ſo infected with a ſcandalous love-affair, that ſhe could not cure herſelf by a leap from the rock *Leucate*; where nevertheleſs

vertheleſs many lovers had found a remedy, and to which *Jupiter* himſelf, as the poets ſay, often applied, when extraordinarily piqued at any beauty. They will object to us *Sempronia*, who was well-skilled in *Greek* and *Latin*, and yet very diſſolute; with *Oriſtilla* and many others, to ſhew that women may know a great deal of good, and yet be guilty of much evil; but ſuch examples are to little purpoſe, or any proofs they can bring. I own that a woman may know morality, tho' ſhe follows not the rules and precepts thereof; and that the practice of virtue does not always accompany the knowledge of it: As they who are ignorant of morality may yet behave well, ſuch as know it may yet do amiſs; but if ignorance prevents the former from being more perfect in virtue, knowledge prevents the latter from being exceſſive in their vileneſs.

And how can it be expected that the light of this ſcience ſhould infallibly be followed, when even that of grace itſelf is ſometimes reſiſted? We may add, that as the moſt skilful phyſicians cure not all diſeaſes, the wiſeſt philoſophers correct not always the vitious inclinations; philoſophy does not make us impeccable, any more than phyſic not ſubject to maladies. The ſtubbornneſs of our mind or conſtitution often reſiſts the rules or the effects both of the one and the other, but this by no means prevents their being uſeful. We ought not on this

this account to reject morality, or think it unneceſſary, even to thoſe who follow it not intirely in their conduct. If ſuch as have ſtudied it ceaſe not however to be vitious, they would undoubtedly have been more ſo had they been intirely ignorant.

We may ſay of women who ſin notwithſtanding the aſſiſtance of knowledge, what is ſaid of thoſe who die under the hands of a phyſician, after all that could be done to ſave them: *Perhaps they would not have laſted ſo long, had they not followed his preſcriptions; if he could not prolong life any farther, they owe it to him for ſome time.* Morality does as much when the repugnancy of our conſtitution prevents the good effects of its precepts; if it cauſes us not to gain an intire victory, at leaſt it makes us hold out for ſome time; if it makes not our courſe to paſs the mid-day, at leaſt it continues it all the morning. So far then it does good; but ſuppoſe it was uſeleſs to ſome women, what can be ſaid to divert them from the ſtudy of morality, which might not be ſaid to prevent men from applying themſelves thereto? Will they deſpiſe it, becauſe the moſt knowing have erred? Or will they renounce it, becauſe *Ariſtotle* was amorous, *Seneca* ambitious, and *Plato* given to luxury?

And if we muſt not abandon philoſophy, becauſe we meet with ſome philoſophers not ſo upright as they ought to be; why ſhould women

men contemn the ſcience of manners, becauſe ſome have been found not the leſs vitious for their skill therein; ſurely this reaſon is too weak to divert them from it: Beſides I can aſſure them, that ſuch examples are very rare. I am ſpeaking only of the ſcience of morality, and not of many others which may be uſeleſs to them if not dangerous; nor of certain arts, the knowledge whereof cauſeth no better effects in the mind than comets have in the air, the light of which is commonly attended with ſome malign influence.

Nor would I be thought to make any apology for *Sappho* or *Sempronia:* I grant that the former was guilty in her too violent love for *Phaon*; but how does this affect morality, to own that an excellent poeteſs had too ſtrong paſſions? Need we wonder that wiſdom and poeſy ſhould ſometimes diſagree? And would it not be a greater miracle to ſee in many theſe two enemies reconciled? There is a great deal of difference between making verſes and doing good works. There are but too many women, who ſpend their time in writing bad verſes, and who take more pains to put their words in rhime, than to ſhew reaſon in their actions and prudence in their conduct.

We may ſay as much of *Sempronia* * as of *Sappho*; *This lady*, ſaith *Saluſt* †, *ſung and dan-*

* The wife of *D. Brutus.*

† Saluſt in Bell. Catilin.

ced

ted more elegantly than is neceſſary for a virtuous woman of her quality; with many other qualifications that are only inſtrumental to luxury; but every thing was dearer to her than modeſty and decorum: It is hard to ſay, which ſhe was leſs ſparing of, her money or her reputation; ſuch then is this famous hiſtorian's opinion concerning this lady's ſinging and dancing; ſo that there are ſciences which reſtrain not vice.

Not that I would be thought to war againſt poetry, eloquence, or other elegant arts; I know that hiſtory commends the chaſtity of the *Sibyls*, and fable that of the *Muſes*; I know too, that *Hortenſia* was not the leſs chaſte becauſe ſhe was eloquent *; that *Corinna* † was eſteem'd virtuous, tho' ſhe five times gain'd the prize in poetry from *Pindar* himſelf; that *Erinna* ‡ was not thought leſs innocent

* The daughter of *Hortenſius*, who pleaded the cauſe of the *Roman* matrons ſo eloquently, that for her ſake part of the tribute impoſed upon them was remitted.

† *Corinna*, of *Theſpiæ*, or according to others of *Corinth*. She is taken notice of by *Euſtathius* and *Pauſanias* and *Propert.* lib. ii.

Et ſua quum antiquæ committit ſcripta Corinnæ,
Carminaque Erinnes non putat æquà ſuis.

See *Plutarch*, on the *Athenians*; and on muſic.

‡ *Erinna* of *Teos*, or according to *Euſtathius*, of *Leſbos* or *Telos*. She wrote a poem called *Elacatè*, conſiſting of 300 verſes in the *Æolic* and *Doric* dialect, likewiſe ſeveral epigrams. She was cotemporary with *Sappho*, and died in the twentieth year of her age.

—Σαφὼ δ' Ἠριννης ὅσσον μελέεσσιν ἀμείνων,
Ἠριννη Σαφφῦς τόσσον ἐν ἑξαμέτροις. Brod. Epig. l. i.

than

than other young women of her time, tho' at the age of twenty her poetry was more admired than that of *Homer*; and that ſaint *Jerom* finds no fault with *Eunomia* for making as good verſes as her father *Nazarius*.

I would be cautious of oppoſing any thing that in ſome meaſure can adorn the mind; it would be wrong to decry what is agreeable in order to praiſe what is uſeful: I only ſay, that it is not enough for women to know, like *Sappho* and *Sempronia*, the art of dancing or writing well, if they know not how to live well; that not having time ſufficient for neceſſary things, there is no reaſon they ſhould ſpend the better part of it on things that are indifferent or ſuperfluous: And that, as in the opinion of *Saluſt*, there are ſciences which tend to luxury, morality incites us only to virtue, and that ſtudy it as hard as we can, there is no fear of being corrupted.

I mean not, in order to prove this, to fill my diſcourſe with the many excellent examples which hiſtory preſents to us; tho' they would ſuit well with my deſign, and ſerve to ſhew that there is nothing in morality but what is pure, and that it teacheth nothing but probity. I intend not to deſcribe at large the many learned women who have been ſuch admirers of this ſcience, as, in order to ſhun all manner of avocation, renounced all buſineſs and the common diverſions of their time; as, for inſtance,

ſtance, *Cleobuline* * daughter to one of the wiſe men of *Greece*, who made a vow of virginity, that ſhe might be the leſs diverted from her ſtudies and the practice of morality; the daughter alſo of *Pythagoras*, who during her whole life did nothing elſe but teach publicly this ſcience, ſo as to keep an open ſchool for other young women, and to read them lectures inſtead of her father †: And *Theano* her diſciple ſo renown'd for her virtue, and who hath left ſo many fine writings for the good conduct of manners, and ſuch excellent books for the glory and inſtruction of her ſex ‡.

I intend not to make mention of all that have wrote learnedly on this ſubject, as *Sulpitia* the wife of *Calenus*, who wrote *on the morals of married women*, with ſo much art and underſtanding that *Martial* commends her books as a maſter-piece of the kind ‖: Or of all that were skilled in this ſcience at the time of the apoſtles and primitive chriſtians, as *Tecla* the diſciple of ſaint *Paul* **; *Priſcilla* †† who

* She was ſo called from her father's name, *Cleobulus*; her other name was *Eumetis*. See *Plutarch*'s banquet of the ſeven wiſe men. Diog. Laert. in the life of *Cleobulus*. *Athen.* x. 15.

† Her name was *Damo*. See *Moreri*.

‡ After the death of *Pythagoras* ſhe preſided in his ſchool: She wrote in verſe a treatiſe on the *Pythagorean* philoſophy. *Diog. Laert. Jamblic.* in the life of *Pythagoras*.

‖ Lib. x. Epigr. 35, 38.

** The firſt martyr among women, *A. D.* 49.

†† Acts xviii. 2, 26. Rom. xvi. 3.

inſtructed

inſtructed *Apollos*, *Barha* * the diſciple of *Origen*; or who were afterwards excellent in the time of ſaint *Jerom*, as *Leta*, *Demetrias*, *Euſtochium*, *Furia*, *Paula*, *Herontia*, and many others, whoſe lives we need only conſider, to learn that the ſcience of manners hath nothing in it that can give offence, ſince ſo many holy women applied themſelves thereto. There is no need of all theſe examples, eſpecially where there are the ſtrongeſt reaſons; we have proofs more than enough to ſhew that morality is a fountain moſt pure, wherein there is no fear of being deſtroyed by the reflection, like as in that wherein *Narciſſus* look'd, or of being infected by bathing, as in that of *Scylla*. It is here that the charms of *Circe* have no force to poiſon us with pleaſure, or to change a young lady into a monſter. Here we need not fear the illuſions of ſelf-love to make us embrace a ſhadow, or be ſmitten with ourſelves. This fountain cannot be prejudicial to us, whether we uſe it for a bath or mirrour; it ſhews us our ſpots and how to rub them out.

It is not ſo with other arts and ſciences. Eloquence may accuſe the innocent and defend the guilty, whereas morality always praiſes

* When her father *Dioſcores* found that ſhe was turn'd chriſtian he was greatly enraged, and deliver'd her himſelf to the executioner; and after ſhe had endured many ſevere tortures, he himſelf by leave of the judge ſmote off her head with a ſword.

virtue,

virtue and condemns vice: Some arts are indifferent as to good or evil, and take not part with the one any more than with the other; but this ſcience is never indifferent to vice, it is its profeſſed enemy; it is as contrary to it, as life is to death, or light to darkneſs. It labours inceſſantly in the defence of virtue; it keeps us from inſolence in good fortune and deſpair in bad; it fortifies us againſt the aſſault of our paſſions; it gives us courage in danger and comfort in affliction; it is uſeful in every time of life, condition, or circumſtance. It is not like thoſe vain ſciences, which abandon us in time of need, and ſerve to no other purpoſe than to make a ſhew of and parade.

Of what uſe is aſtrology to a man ſhut up in a dungeon? Of what advantage is it to him to know the ſecret influences and all the revolutions of the heavens, when he can neither ſee the heavens nor the earth? Of what ſervice is poeſy during a ſtorm? It may be able to deſcribe it perhaps, but can it appeaſe its fury, or ſtill the raging winds? What aid can the art military give to a man attacked with any violent paſſion? Can he defend himſelf with his ſword againſt an inviſible enemy? Of what ſervice was the valour of *Ajax* to him againſt the ſtroke of his deſpair? Or even that of *Mars* againſt the ſharp fits of love? Indeed, moſt of the ſciences are of very little uſe towards hindering us from being culpable or wretched.

It

It is morality alone that can properly defend us against affliction or vice; it will stand by us when all the other disappear. While the poet trembles at the apprehension of danger, nor is able to draw any assistance from his trade, tho' his budget be full of sonnets, epigrams, or elegies; morality will furnish him with all that is necessary either for the avoiding evil or the enduring it patiently; it will give him strength and courage, and he will find the art of reasoning of much more avail than the art of rhiming.

While the whole science of judicial astrology cannot throw a ray of light upon the eye or mind of a wretch in prison, morality will light up flambeaux on every side, and shew him heaven in spite of all the darkness that surrounds him; it will discover the stars, whose aspect is not hidden from the wise, tho' their eyes be hood-wink'd, or even put out. Lastly, while the soldier cannot use his sword, and hath no arms to defend himself from inquietude or a fever, this science will give him wherewithal to resist the evils of body and mind; it will furnish him with bucklers either for the warding off the blow or healing his wounds.

There is nothing wherein morality contributes not its service, as it is a faithful companion in the greatest extremities, in the most irksom inquietude, and in the most severe maladies.

dies. Hear what *Seneca* ſaith; it is neceſſary here to uſe the authority of that philoſopher, who hath been eſteem'd in all ages for this our ſcience, in order to ſhew women what profit they may draw therefrom in the greateſt evils that can happen to them. *Would to God*, ſaith he, ſpeaking to his mother, *my father had not paid ſo much deference to cuſtom, and that he had permitted you to have employ'd more of your time in the ſcience of the wiſe. Had you known more of* morality, *you would have felt leſs affliction. I ſhould not have been at any trouble to comfort you, or find out reaſons to render my baniſhment ſupportable to you; I ſhould only pray you to make uſe of thoſe which you had acquired by this ſtudy; you would have had no need to be inſtructed, but only to be put in mind of being conſtant.*

This is what *Seneca* writes to his mother concerning the uſefulneſs of morality; but he goes further and prays her, ancient as ſhe was, to ſtudy it, and employ the reſt of her days in application thereto. He adviſeth her not to regard her age; and ſhews her that this will always be of ſervice to her in ſtrengthening her againſt all the attacks of bad fortune, and even teach her the art to vanquiſh death. He prays her to conſider, with what might ſhe would reſiſt misfortunes, if ſhe knew morality more perfectly, when from the little ſhe had

learn'd of it ſhe had gather'd ſo much reſolution and courage.

Whatever ſlight knowledge women may have of it, it will always be of ſervice to them; ſince if their own reaſoning ſufficeth not, they may at leaſt make uſe of that of others; if they ſee not as yet clearly the right way of conduct, they at leaſt have no averſion for their guide; *For of what avail is it*, adds this philoſopher, *to offer comfort to women, who know no other ſciences but thoſe which ſoften or corrupt them? We may poſſibly alleviate their diſtreſſes, but cannot cure them; we may lull their pains, but we cannot provide a complete remedy.*

They muſt be treated like infants who know nothing more than to complain, and by their cries alone ſhew their malady; it matters not to them, whether the medicines preſcribed are proper, ſo they be not bitter. The leaſt light dazzles them, and reaſon does not preſent herſelf to them but in diſguiſe: I mean, that tho' we may leſſen their pain, we cannot eradicate it. Inſtead of permitting our advice to reach the bottom of the ſoul, they deny it entrance; the remedies to be applied therefore cannot be thoſe that are moſt uſeful.

Inſtead of demanding from them the exerciſe of their reaſon, we muſt rather prohibit it; leſt they ſhould employ againſt themſelves what others, better inſtructed, would only uſe

againſt

againſt their enemies. We can do nothing more for them than recommend plays, walks, muſic, or the like, to divert them; ſuch then is their danger when under affliction: The reaſoning of morality effectually heals thoſe who are learned therein, like a skilful phyſician; but diverſions only cure the ignorant, as a quack or mountebank. We treat thoſe who have ſtudied in another manner; we apply remedies more glorious and profitable; we deceive them not, in order to cure them; we ſet forth all that is excellent in morality or ſolid in philoſophy.

Having ſeen how *Seneca* demean'd himſelf towards his mother when under affliction, let us now ſee how he acted with regard to his wife; and with what ſort of reaſoning he encourag'd her, when ſhe was condemn'd to death by *Nero*; or rather let us conſider the fruits of morality in this lady, when animated by the precepts of this ſcience. She not only equals the conſtancy of her husband, but even ſeems to ſurpaſs it. If *Seneca* dies to obey *Nero*, *Paulina* dies only to oblige *Seneca:* There is the more glory in her dying, becauſe there is leſs conſtraint.

But to go on, the ſtile that *Plutarch* writes in to his wife upon the death of their daughter *Timoxena* *, is very remarkable; he treats her with all the tenderneſs of reaſon and affection;

* She was about two years old.

he ſpeaks to her as to the wife of a philoſopher; to comfort her he repreſents to her the will of God, which ought to be the rule of ours; he tells her of the happineſs of another life, and the miſeries of this; and to this purpoſe he makes uſe of the richeſt and moſt ſublime arguments; he maintains a providence and the immortality of the ſoul; or rather he ſends her not conſolation but compliments, to thank her for not ſtanding in need of ſuch comforts. And to ſhew, how far he was aſſured of the ſtrength of her mind, he writes not to her ſo much to demand firmneſs and conſtancy in this conflict, as to praiſe her for the teſtimony ſhe had given of it on the like occaſions.

He praiſes her for having on the death of her eldeſt ſon, and of another * after him, ſhewn ſo much courage, and ſo wiſely temper'd the reſolution and tenderneſs of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. And yet her loſs was great; for beſides the many good qualities of this her youngeſt ſon, for which any indifferent perſon wou'd have regretted the loſs of him, *Plutarch* obſerves, that *his mother had ſuckled him herſelf, and had not only been at great pains to rear him, but had alſo ſuffer'd on his account a ſevere inciſion in her breaſt. She was not*, he adds, *like ſome certain mothers who are exceſſive in their grief, and pour forth the moſt lamentable cries on the death of their children, tho' they had been at no trouble*

* Whoſe name was *Chæron*.

in

in raiſing them, and ſcarce had ever ſeen them but in the arms of their nurſe; or perhaps had ſometimes vouchſafed to dandle them, looking upon them rather as a paſtime than the object of affection.

Her mind was not leſs affectionate and charitable than generous and noble; if ſhe follow'd reaſon in regretting the loſs of her children with moderation, it was after having follow'd nature in raiſing them with love. We may eaſily judge from her taking ſo much pains in bringing them up, that if ſhe mourn'd not for them as ſome mothers would, it was not becauſe ſhe had leſs affection, but only leſs meanneſs of ſoul; when with all her care and pain ſo little diſorder was ſeen in the houſe, and ſo little change in her countenance, that the friends and neighbours of *Plutarch*, who came to condole with her, could not think the news was true of the child's death. Never was the mourning of a woman accompanied with leſs ceremony; never was woman's grief leſs uncourteous than hers. It did not hinder her from entertaining her acquaintance and relations with her uſual complaiſance and eaſy grace; ſo that all were conſtrained to admire her, inſtead of pitying and complaining with her.

Now to what muſt we attribute the conſtancy and decency of this lady, but to the ſcience of manners, which ſhe had learn'd from

the example and converſation of her husband? Indeed, had morality no other good effects, and was it not otherwiſe neceſſary for women than as it fortifies their mind againſt the aſſaults of bad fortune, this undoubtedly would be a ſufficient reaſon to invite them to the ſtudy of it; for what can be more commendable in life than to ſee a perſon of ſuch noble conſtancy, as not to change, like ſome women, their reſolution or countenance every moment?

What can be more excellent in a woman than this æquanimity, which ſets them ſo much above the moſt fatal accidents? On the contrary, what can be more irkſom than to live with thoſe whom every the leaſt affliction intirely caſts down; whoſe demeanor is changed only with the fear of evil, and the leaſt misfortune makes them peeviſh and angry with all about them? Yet ſuch is the diſorder that ariſes from the ignorance of morality, when the ſlighteſt diſtreſs ſo overwhelms them, as that no kind of reaſoning is ſtrong enough to make their mind eaſy, or converſation equal. But we muſt not think that this is the only advantage to be drawn from this ſcience, the making our behaviour more pleaſant, and our company more agreeable.

Beſides the conſtancy and ſtrength of mind that it teacheth us, is there any one good quality deſirable in life or for ſociety, that does not find a perfect leſſon here? Upon a thorough examination

mination and ſearch after what is capable of rendering us moſt agreeable, we ſhall find that it is not taught in any other ſchool but that of morality. For what is required to this purpoſe, but that a perſon ſhould be good-humour'd, not piqued at every trifle, not falſe or deceitful, not given to the ſpirit of contradiction, not bold or confident in her behaviour or diſcourſe, not injurious through gaiety of heart, or inclined to rallery at the expence of others? Theſe, I think, are the principal qualities that one would wiſh for in a companion.

And are not theſe taught by morality? Does not *Ariſtotle* employ a fourth part of his *ethics* in deſcribing the virtues neceſſary for converſation? Here he ſets forth that deſirable ſweetneſs that prevents us from being touchy and exceptious, that freedom and candour which abhors diſſimulation and affectation, that complaiſance which reaſonably adapts itſelf to the diſcourſe and opinions of our converſants, that pleaſantneſs which is never out of humour, when others are diſpos'd to mirth and innocent recreation; that modeſty which prevents our ſaying any thing rude or indecent. In ſhort, is is morality that gives us lectures of civility as well as of probity, and teacheth us the art of pleaſing, as well as of ſubduing the paſſions and leading a good life.

We muſt not think therefore that in order to ſtudy this ſcience, it is neceſſary to retire to

the cloſet and ſhun company; morality is not a virtue of ſuch a melancholy caſt; it is a probity, that is by no means an enemy to gentility. On the contrary, I dare aver that no ſort of civility can be complete without it; and that, to know the world, does not only conſiſt in paying compliments or making curteſies: For ſince true civility ought to be accompanied with diſcretion, for fear of ſpeaking improperly; and with probity, for fear of ſaying a falſe thing in order to pleaſe; it is impoſſible to know it rightly, without having before learned the rules and precepts of morality.

There is nothing then, I think, that can be objected; and that we need not ſtay to anſwer thoſe who ſay, that women in order to apply themſelves to this ſcience, muſt prefer the pleaſure of converſation and of reading to the neceſſary buſineſs and care of a family; and that it is not proper for ladies eſpecially, or for thoſe who have no need to be under concern for their behaviour. This objection is weak and frivolous, ſince œconomy ſeems a part of morality, and muſt draw from hence its rules and principles. I ſee no reaſon then, why we may not conclude, that of all the ſciences there is none more proper for women than this of manners; it teaches them all that is neceſſary to render their actions virtuous, and their converſation agreeable; it gives them the means of conquering either bad inclinations or bad fortune.

It

It is the ſhorteſt as well as the moſt uſeful method to form the *complete gentleman* and the *accompliſh'd woman*; for rightly to conſider who they are that merit theſe titles, we need not deſcend to the particular circumſtances of each profeſſion; this would be impoſſible and ſuperfluous, ſince we muſt then write as many books as there are different faſhions of living; and to ſay, that among all the conditions of life there is but one proper for the gentleman, which muſt be look'd for among courtiers only, is an abſurd and unjuſt opinion: For, why may not an excellent writer, a great philoſopher, or an eloquent orator be call'd a *gentleman* with as much right as a *courtier?*

What? Can we think this title peculiar only to thoſe who ſometimes prefer intereſt to amity, and fortune to virtue? who not very uncommonly profeſs ignorance, and to know no other art but that of deceiving with a good grace, and concealing their vices under the appearance of probity; who are more anxious after a ſmart air than a ſound judgment; who are always talking of their dogs, and horſes, fencing, dancing, plays, dreſs, and the like; and indeed know many things which a man may very well be ignorant of without loſing the title of a gentleman?

But ſuppoſing theſe galantries, ſtudiedairs, and graces were neceſſary, ſurely theſe are not what is to be moſt eſteem'd, or the only things that

are to be learned. Theſe are but, as I may ſay, the externals either of man or woman; and I beg it may be look'd upon as an infallible truth, that as neither ſex can acquire eſteem without having prudence, it is impoſſible to have prudence without probity, or probity without morality. This is the foundation of all my diſcourſes, and ought to be ſo of every intention.

Eſpecially women ought to think, that they are much more oblig'd than the heathens to apply themſelves to the ſcience of moral virtue, becauſe they are promis'd other rewards for the practice of it; their obligation is the greater, becauſe the way to perfection is now more plain and eaſy. Chriſtian virtues not only ennoble the moral, but ſupport, aſſiſt, direct, and encourage them; chriſtian virtue brings the ſame advantage to moral virtues, as the rational ſoul to the more groſs and ſenſitive, when it is infuſed therein. I have no mind to perſue this matter further, and to fling into one diſcourſe all that I intend for the following chapters; wherein I ſhall endeavour to demonſtrate, God willing, that chriſtianity by no means hinders women from being agreeable to men of ſenſe; that the piety, which God requires at our hands, is not contrary to that courteous behaviour that is requiſite to make converſation amiable; and that, if there was never any age, wherein a woman could be ſaid

to

to be accompliſh'd without the moral virtues, it is impoſſible to form ſuch a one in this, without wiſhing her adorn'd with chriſtian virtue.

CHAP. IX.

The COQUETTE.

WERE women to apply themſelves to the ſcience of manners, we ſhould not ſee ſo many coquettes; there would be more genuine ſimplicity, and leſs affectation in their actions; they would know that, beſides the care of a good conſcience and of the internal faculties, they ought to ſhew the viſible ſigns of probity in their countenance, and that the modeſty required of them regards not only the face but their intentions and thoughts. Indeed, ſince we cannot live but in ſome company or other we muſt endeavour to give a good opinion of our life; we muſt be afraid of infecting ſociety by ſcandal; we muſt appear good for our own intereſt on the account of reputation, and alſo for the intereſt of the public on the account of example.

We muſt take care that the externals condemn us not, and ſo behave as if from the ſlighteſt motion of the body that of the ſoul may receive a prejudice. The wiſe man as well

well as the orator, ought to regard action and geſture; levity of mind betrays itſelf in our behaviour upon the leaſt obſervation. And as they who have not patience to ſtay till the cloke ſtrikes, need only look on the dial to know the hour; ſo they who cannot diſcover our deſigns before we ſpeak, need only examine the countenance, and poſſibly they may ſee our thoughts as clearly as the hour of the day upon the dial of the clock.

It is here they may better learn what we are, than either from diſcourſe, or by phyſiognomy; becauſe phyſiognomy ſhews only what we may be, but the countenance betrays what we really are; ſo that he who was deceiv'd upon ſeeing the picture of *Socrates*, would not perhaps have been wrong in his judgment, had he ſeen the man himſelf. If in the picture of *Socrates* he ſaw the vitiouſneſs of his inclinations, perhaps he would have perceiv'd in his mien and geſture that he had intirely ſubdued them. Phyſiognomy therefore is not ſo certain as the countenance itſelf; for ſtudy, examples, and the preſent juncture of affairs may change or correct our inclinations; but whether it be art or nature or both together, that have formed our internal part, the countenance is always the living image of it, and the ſmoke as it were of the fire that burns within.

Let

Let not any one talk of feigning and deceiving the eyes by a falſe appearance; I know well enough how far artifice can go: This comedy laſts not long; the perſon will ſoon appear notwithſtanding any counterfeit; whatever pains we may take to diſguiſe ourſelves, the conſcience diſcovers itſelf in our carriage when it cannot ſo well expreſs itſelf in ſpeech. Our heart depends not ſo much upon us for its motions, as our tongues for diſcourſe; we can more eaſily help ſpeaking than bluſhing; and baſhfulneſs is not ſo much in our power as ſilence: If the guilty may be wiſe enough not to divulge their crime, they ſometimes cannot hinder their countenances from betraying them; the inward torture of remorſe ſigns their confeſſion in the diſorder of their carriage before they come to the rack or gibbet.

On this account perhaps it is more eaſy to deceive the blind than the deaf, or to diſſemble before the one than the other; and from hence too perhaps they who have conſider'd this affair, ſay there are two ſorts of phyſiognomy, the one natural, the other acquired; this ſhews the preſent paſſions, that only ſuch as we may be ſubject to by birth; and the natural we think the leſs important, becauſe not ſo many live according to their inclinations, as according to habit.

But granting it were otherwiſe certain, and that its conjectures are ſtrong enough, whereby to judge

judge of probity or vitiouſneſs, when we follow our conſtitution and act rather according to the (ſuppos'd) influence of the ſtars than by the conduct of reaſon; ſince the one is not in our power, we ought to correct the other which depends upon ourſelves, and render falſe the appearance of vice in the lineaments of the face, by the decent modeſty of our carriage.

This is what the ethics of *Ariſtotle*, as well as thoſe of *Thomas Aquinas*, command us to ſtudy; and for this reaſon all in general allow the regulating the external to be a particular virtue; and if this is neceſſary to both ſexes, it is eſpecially ſo for women whoſe natural modeſty obliges them to be the more circumſpect. Philoſophy, both ſacred and profane, ſpeak here after the ſame manner, and give the ſame precepts, tho' their ends are different enough. The *Pagans*, who commonly were more concern'd for reputation than virtue, took alſo more pains for apparent probity than for the true. On the contrary, chriſtians ought not to content themſelves with the appearance, but to have more dread of ſin than of the diſhonour that attends it. This is what women ought principally to remember, and to think, that not to be coquettes it is not enough to reform the countenance, but they muſt firſt reform the conſcience; for whatever appears bad upon the countenance is but the effect of what is bad in the ſoul.

I would

I would not have it thought that by deſiring a modeſt appearance, I intend to draw the picture only of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, or require nothing more than theatrical decency; it is eaſy to judge, that the ſame God who condemns the ſcandalous approves not of hypocrites; that we muſt not deceive our neighbours, but edify them; and that it is not artifice but truth that ſets a good example. Of what ſervice will it be to take leſs pains to pleaſe him who ſees our thoughts, than thoſe who only regard our outward behaviour. To do well we muſt retrench all that is vitious in the ſoul, if we would correct, as we ought, whatever may give offence in the countenance; we muſt purify the ſource, and the heart muſt be modeſt if the face will appear ſo.

Coquetry is not a vice of to-day, but hath long ago been cried down. I am not the firſt that have attack'd it, tho' perhaps the firſt that have done it in ſo public and plain a manner; and I think we need not invent any new invectives againſt coquettes, ſince thoſe which antiquity offers are enough to confound them. I intend not to make uſe of any but the moſt celebrated and beſt known hiſtories; let any one only read what *Tacitus* hath wrote of *Poppea Sabina* *, to learn in what ſort of eſteem co-

* She was the daughter of *Titus*, but took her name from the illuſtrious *Poppeus Sabinus* her mother's father. She was firſt married to *Rufus Criſpinus*, then to *Otho*; who being ſent into *Luſitania*, *Nero* divorced his wife *Octavia* and married *Poppea*. Tacit. Annal. 13.

quettes

quettes have been ever held, and that there never was an age, when women were not deſpis'd who wanted an unaffected modeſty. After this I think I need not amuſe myſelf with deſcribing the qualities, or the marks of an affected coquette. It is not neceſſary for women that I ſhould ſhew them their blemiſhes; I ſhall only preſent them with a mirrour wherein they may ſee themſelves; and wherein, without bluſhing at the obſervations and corrections of another, they may make what reflections they pleaſe upon their own defects.

The ſingle example of this lady diſplays every circumſtance belonging hereto, and cannot fail of cauſing all the horror that perſons of high birth ought to have againſt affectation. There is no trick or artifice that ſhe did not employ to pleaſe *Nero*; ſhe was not content with her natural beauty, nor with the common care or a decent dreſs; but it is amazing to think what pains ſhe took every night to daub her face over with a paſte, and hide it as it were in a caſe, that the colour might appear more freſh and clear in the morning: She never bathed but in milk, ſo that ſhe was attended with a troop of ſhe-aſſes, tho' ſhe took a walk but half a mile. Never was a woman more curious in odours and perfumes; ſhe never ſhewed but a part of her face, to heighten the curioſity of ſeeing the reſt.

Now what was her deſign in all this but to diſplay the coquette? She would fain pleaſe the emperor,

emperor, but when *ſhe had work'd up his affection to a pitch of vehemence and impatience, ſhe chang'd her former behaviour into haughtineſs and deſpite*; ſhe ſtudied not ſo much to poſſeſs the good graces of *Nero*, as to rob *Octavia* of them to whom only they were due. To this end ſhe was not ſatisfied with attacking her beauty, but fell upon her innocence, and carried her point ſo far, as, having ſuborn'd a domeſtic of *Octavia*'s to accuſe her of criminal amours with a muſician *, to cauſe her to be condemn'd and baniſh'd from *Rome*. But how ready are the world to teſtify an affection for virtue! murmurs and complaints fill the ſtreets upon this her condemnation. The people, ſaith *Tacitus*, *who commonly ſpeak more freely on account of their natural ſimplicity, and having leſs danger to fear from the lowneſs of their fortune, began to clamour againſt the emperor:* The ſeeds of ſedition are ſown; they break down the ſtatues of *Poppea*, and fondly bear the images of *Octavia* upon their ſhoulders; ſo that the emperor being alarm'd at theſe daring reſentments was oblig'd to recal his wife *Octavia*.

But of little avail was this popular protection, which paſſeth over like a ſtorm, and after a little noiſe is heard no more: *Poppea* entertain'd not the leſs hatred, nor the emperor more affection for *Octavia*; ſhe was much hap-

* *Eucerus*, a native of *Alexandria*.

pier

pier in her baniſhment than upon her return. She came near her enemies only to make her wretchedneſs inevitable, and to try the utmoſt efforts of their malice. A moſt accompliſh'd young lady muſt be ſacrific'd to the inſolence of a coquette; ſhe muſt now be accuſed by one who ſhould own himſelf guilty with her; and for this vile purpoſe *Nero* judg'd none ſo proper as *Anicetus* *, the ſame who had accompliſh'd for him the murder of his mother.

Octavia is condemn'd to die, nor can all her prayers and vows move pity; her veins are open'd; but as her blood was chill'd through fear, and flow'd not faſt enough to ſatisfy *Poppea*, ſhe was ſtifled in a bath †: And this cruelty was followed by one ſtill more brutal: Her head being cut off, it was preſented to her enemy, who beheld it with the higheſt tranſport of joy, and flew to the temple to offer ſacrifice, and thank the gods as if they had aſſiſted her in ſo vile an execution. She is now ſatisfied, but did not long enjoy this infamous victory.

Nero himſelf in a caſual fit of paſſion, according to his uſual barbarity, gave her a blow with his foot on her pregnant womb which prov'd fatal to her. This blow no doubt deliver'd *Rome* from many evils, as ſhe ſported

* His franchis'd ſlave; and who, as one convicted by his own confeſſion, underwent a ſham-baniſhment in *Sardinia*.

† In the twenty-firſt year of her age.

herſelf

herſelf in cruelty: But as if *Nero* could not do any good but by chance, he was greatly afflicted at this accident. This monſter could neither have joy nor ſorrow that was innocent; his grief was as criminal as his pleaſures.

He grew quite diſconſolate, and took the pains himſelf from the public roſtrum to magnify and bewail her beauty. He would not permit the body to be burn'd according to the cuſtom of the *Romans*, but order'd it to be richly embalm'd, as if it were injurious that ſo fine a corps ſhould be reduc'd to aſhes: Yet more, he was not leſs extravagant in his fondneſs for a young daughter which he had by *Poppea*; he named her *Auguſta Poppea*, and to render her birth more remarkable, as well as her name, a temple was built to *Fecundity*, and ſtatues decreed to *Fortune*. But this infant dying at the age of four months, ſhe was ſolemnly deify'd, and a new order of prieſts inſtituted on this occaſion. But how much ſoever *Nero* was concern'd, all *Rome* rejoiced: And as ſupple as the courtiers about him were either to laugh or weep out of complaiſance, he could not find one among them that ſorrow'd either for the mother or the daughter.

Can we find in all antiquity a more genuine example of a coquette; or a life more proper to deſcribe their vanity? Can there be any circumſtance for the completely finiſhing this vice, which is not remarkable in the hiſtory of this

this lady? When in reading it, we ſee that if ſome idle fools admire coquettes, the reſt of the world generally deſpiſe them; inſomuch that an emperor himſelf could ſcarce maintain his grandeur and a *Poppea* at the ſame time.

We ſee the blindneſs of ſome men in that of this madman, who deſpiſed his virtuous wife, tho' ſhe was more beautiful, younger, and in all reſpects more amiable than the other: We ſee in *Poppea*, that the common deſign of a vicious coquette is to attack women of character, eſpecially if they are fair, to draw from them the affections that ſolely belong to them, that they may triumph in the glory of a preference: We ſee in this emperor, that the very adorers of ſuch bold coquettes ſometimes become their murderers; God being willing to employ no other hands to pull down theſe idols than thoſe that erected altars to them: Upon the whole, we ſee that if ſuch affection reigns for a while, it at length comes to a miſerable end.

Such then is the picture which *Tacitus* draws of a *Roman* coquette; let us now come to an *Ægyptian*, as drawn by *Plutarch* *; a courteſan, yet ſtill more inſolent in her dreſs and carriage, tho' not ſo cruel in her deſigns; and who far ſurpaſs'd the other in pompous luxury, tho' not perhaps in the extravagant care of her face.

* See the life of *Marc Antony*.

The

The life of *Cleopatra* and that of *Poppea* are ſo very much alike in many particulars, that it ſeems but the ſame hiſtory under different names. *Poppea* would not ſuffer *Nero* to love his wife, nor *Cleopatra*, *Marc Antony*.. Theſe two galants were equally enamour'd; theſe two coquettes equally jealous; and theſe two *Octavias* equally unhappy. They were both more amiable than their rivals, and did all that was in their power to prevent the averſion of their husbands.

What care and what imaginable reſpect did not this latter *Octavia* teſtify to keep the favour of *Marc Antony?* Tho' ſhe was the fineſt lady of her time, and the ſiſter of *Cæſar* *; ſhe piqued not herſelf upon her beauty or high birth, nor entertain'd leſs affection for him than as if it had been reciprocal: She would fain go to ſeek him in *Ægypt*; ſhe kindly received all the meſſengers and ſervants that came from thence, tho' it was her enemy's country; ſhe managed all his affairs in his abſence, and would not quit his houſe upon the advice of *Cæſar*. Where ſhall we find ſuch heroic conſtancy? Where ſhall we find more affection in a wife, or more ingratitude in an husband? Yet whatever ſhe did or ſuffer'd was repaid with contempt.

* She was the half-ſiſter of *Octavius Cæſar*, being the daughter of *Ancharia*, but *Cæſar* was born of *Accia* the Neice of *Julius Cæſar*.

Cleo-

Cleopatra had ſtoln from her *Marc Antony*, whoſe eminent virtues could not reſiſt the artifices of a coquette. I ſhall not treat here of what ſhe did in common with ſuch ladies when they act with any deſign, nor deſcribe at large her cunning and complaiſance, nor the tragical end of her amours; theſe are circumſtances well known to all the world; I ſhall therefore only make ſome remarks on the beginning of this affair, which part of the hiſtory is not ſo generally known as the reſt.

Marc Antony going to make war with the *Parthians*, commanded *Cleopatra* to appear perſonally before him in *Cilicia*, in order to clear herſelf of ſome accuſations laid to her charge of having aided his enemies *Brutus* and *Caſſius*: She prepared to obey him, and ſet out with ſuch a magnificent equipage, that *Plutarch* cannot deſcribe it without aſtoniſhment, and which indeed ſeems more like fable than hiſtory. She met him on the river *Cydnus*, when *

The barge ſhe ſat in, like a burniſh'd throne
Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold,

* What follows is only a tranſlation from *Plutarch*, which I have given in the words of *Shakeſpear*, marking in a different character ſome graces not in *Plutarch*, who by the way heard this relation from his own grandfather *Lamprias*, who had it from *Philotas* a phyſician at that time in *Alexandria*.

Purple

Purple the ſails, and ſo *perfum'd*, that
The winds were love-ſick with them.
——— *The Oars were ſilver,*
Which to the tune of flutes kept ſtroke, and made
The water which they beat, to follow faſter
As amorous of their ſtrokes. *For her own perſon,*
It beggar'd all deſcription; ſhe did lie
In her pavilion, cloth of gold, of tiſſue,
O'er-picturing that Venus, *where we ſee*
The fancy outwork nature. On each ſide her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like ſmiling Cupids,
With divers colour'd fans, whoſe wind did ſeem
To glow the delicate cheeks, which they did cool.——
Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
And Graces *were apparell'd. At the helm*
A ſeeming mermaid ſteers; the ſilken tackles
Swell with the touches of thoſe flower-ſoft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A ſtrange inviſible perfume hits the ſenſe
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city caſt
Her people forth upon her; while Antony
Inthron'd i'th' market-place, did ſit alone,
Whiſtling to the air; which but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on *Cleopatra* too,
And made a gap in nature.—

What a ſailing was this? Can we imagine an equipage more inſolently grand? So extravagant was her affectation, ſhe was not ſatisfied with

with the habit of a queen, but muſt ſhine a goddeſs. This is the true picture of coquettes, who always affect to be remarkable for ſomething extraordinary in their dreſs, their diſcourſe, their carriage, and their countenance; who ſpend their time in inventing faſhions, and pride themſelves in novelties even to the ruin of their eſtates; and who upon examination will be found to have much the ſame deſigns with this luxurious queen, when ſhe choſe to appear in the habit of *Venus*, not intending any other diverſions than what that goddeſs took delight in; for, believe me, it is no eaſy matter for a true coquette to preſerve her chaſtity.

There are *Cleopatras* in every age, who are not leſs inſolent than ſhe was, however leſs ſumptuous; they have as much boldneſs, tho' not ſo much wealth to teſtify it: Tho' they have not the means to act like *Cleopatra*, they ſtill ſhew their deſire, and that it is not humility which reſtrains them but fortune. As pearls and the richeſt ornaments give no prejudice to the ſober appearance of an honeſt woman, ſo ordinary clothes and even rags prevent not the vanity of a coquette from ſhewing itſelf. There is always a certain air in their countenance, which diſcovers what they are; and whatever ſigns of poverty appear in their dreſs, there is none of modeſty in their face.

I would not be thought to ſpeak againſt a proper care in dreſs; I have elſewhere ſhewn this

this not only to be innocent but requiſite; and I know that women too careleſs herein or ſluttiſh have been diſliked in all ages, inſomuch that at *Athens Philippida* ordained that women who walked in public without being decently attired ſhould be fined a thouſand groats: And *Heſychius* ſaith there were judges appointed particularly for this purpoſe, who were called *Gynæconomiſts*; and the more to ſhame thoſe who were too negligent herein, the ſentence was fix'd upon a tree in the *Ceramic* or moſt frequented place in the city. There was much the ſame practice in *Lacedæmonia*, where magiſtrates were expreſly appointed, and called *Harmoſyni*, whoſe buſineſs it was to ſee that all ſuch women were puniſhed who appeared in public without a decent attire.

I own there was reaſon in this, becauſe neatneſs ſeems peculiarly attach'd to this ſex; and nothing can be more odious than to ſee a woman dirty and diſordered. I oppoſe not therefore a decent finery but only affectation; I would make allowance alſo for age and quality, provided there is neither luxury nor exceſs, and that they ſpend not, like this *Ægyptian* queen, their whole time and revenue in ſearch after ſomething extravagantly dear and uncommon.

Or otherwiſe, to be coquettes with the more art and ſolemnity, they would ſtand in need of ſuch a protector as *Heliogabalus*, who appointed another ſenate where women might debate up-

on their own affairs, eſpecially on dreſs and faſhions, and all that related to the moſt ridiculous coquetry. Strange diſorder! It was not enough for *Heliogabalus* to ſuffer vice, but he muſt authoriſe it with the ſanction of parliament; joining this ſchool of impudence with that venerable aſſembly who were the ſupport of the empire, and labour'd inceſſantly for the preſervation of the ſtate and good government of the world. No doubt the women admired and loved him for this indulgence; but what honour or what glory was it to be countenanced by ſuch an emperor, who had ſo ſtrong an inclination to vice that he forcibly married the veſtal virgins, *to give his ſucceſſors*, as he ſaid, *a race truly divine*; who made for himſelf a particular God, whom he named *Heliogabalus*, and to whom he offer'd infants, whoſe parents were ſtill living, in order to make his ſacrifices more odious and cruel; and who at length had ſo bad an opinion of his own life, that beſides the poiſon which he continually carried about him he built an high tower, around the pedeſtal whereof was a pavement of ſilver inlaid with jewels of ſeveral kinds, to the end that, when he was pleas'd to throw himſelf from the top, it might be ſaid it was a ſumptuous death, and that never any prince had ſo glorious an end.

Such a one too was *Nero*, who delighted in nothing elſe but vice; who ſet fire to *Rome*, only

only for the pleaſure of ſeeing it burn; he was call'd the ſcourge and plague of the world; who ſpared neither his wife, nor his tutor, nor his mother. Was it at all ſtrange that ſuch a monſter ſhould admire the viciouſly affected? Or that he ſhould protect vice, who was a declared enemy to virtue; or that he ſhould have more eſteem for an inſolent coquette than for an honeſt and diſcreet wife?

Such then are the admirers of theſe inſolent ladies; ſuch are they who praiſe, love, and protect them. The learned and virtuous have quite another opinion of them than the ignorant and vitious; they condemn and decry them as much as poſſible: while *Nero* admir'd them, ſee how *Seneca* deſpis'd them. This philoſopher being baniſh'd writes to his mother to comfort her, and ſays, that never having acted the coquette, it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould want courage and reſolution.

You never, ſays he, *have idolis'd ſuch things as* women *generally adore, pearls, coſmetics, and ſuperfluous ornament; their example could not corrupt you; as you have ever loved to follow reaſon in the rules of modeſty rather than cuſtom in affectation. You never were aſhamed, as many are, of being with child, nor afterwards of being ſeen in your children's company, for fear of diſcovering your age; it was never your manner to paint or perfume the face; nor did you ever delight in clothes ſo delicately fine, as not to*

cover or load the wearer any more than if ſhe was naked. You never had any paſſion but for virtue, and have always eſteem'd the ornaments of the mind above thoſe of the face; or in a word you have never been a coquette, but have always preſerved inviolably the modeſty of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

After this, *Seneca* did not doubt of the courage of *Elbia* in her affliction; and as ſhe had never ſorted with the affected, he made no ſcruple of placing her among the ſincerely brave. Indeed, he had cauſe to think that coquettes are ſubject to mean-ſpirited fear; ſince it is not conceivable that they ſhould gather any ſtrength of mind from the force of reaſon, who ſpent their whole time in dreſs and painting. They have ſo much care for the decoration of their face, that the mind is quite neglected; on the contrary ſuch as deſpiſe theſe affected airs, are commonly generous and noble; as they have a ſoul free from artifice and conſtraint, they are more capable of firm reſolutions; they deſpiſe ſuperfluous things, making themſelves happy in what is neceſſary.

Perhaps it is for this want of courage, that women of great fortunes but of low birth are ſometimes the moſt inſupportable coquettes of all other; as they have leſs generoſity they have more inſolence and affectation: Their countenance is generally ſtiff and prim; they are like thoſe who are newly made very fine, and

and have never before wore any thing tolerable. Their every action is forced; their looks and ſmiles are all ſtudied; and do what they will, we may plainly perceive from them, that as ſuch who are born rich are generally leſs covetous, ſo women of high birth are always the leſs vain: In ſhort, they are like queens on the ſtage, who ſhew by their action and gait that the ſcepter has not been long in their hands nor the crown upon their head. And as a princeſs in diſguiſe or under affliction, even in tatter'd clothes, diſcovers ſome marks of her grandeur, ſo women that are ambitious, and who being of mean extraction have riſen to the higheſt titles of honour and fortune, without great diſcretion cannot help betraying ſome ſigns of low degree; eſpecially when they affect a grandeur that is not natural to them.

Theſe then may be called the coquettes of fortune, affecting to appear great; as there are other coquettes of the face, affecting to appear beautiful; and likewiſe coquettes of the mind, affecting to appear learned and eloquent. But reſerving theſe for the latter part of my diſcourſe, I ſhall return to the firſt ſort, whom I think we cannot ſufficiently mortify. How ſtrange is their miſtake! All that they do to pleaſe is loſt through their inſolent affectation. It ſeems as if fortune favoured them upon no other condition than that they ſhould reſemble her in being blind; it ſeems as if ſhe had done them no

good by depriving them of that of ſelf-knowledge.

I mean, that they have generally no more prudence than generoſity; as *Seneca* evinceth in what follows, that their affectation is owing to their want of underſtanding and knowledge; if there be ſome among them of any ſpirit, there are very few that have any judgment; they carry it well enough in ſome little points which they have either ſtole or ſtudied; but were we to ſee them more than once, we ſhould find nothing new in their diſcourſe: They treat you with little elſe but grimace; and as they are incapable of ſaying a good thing, they are more ſo of approving it when they hear it. They admire no other books or converſation than what flatters them in their pride, and is adapted to a genius delighted with intrigues and romances.

They diſreliſh the converſation of a plain honeſt man, becauſe he hath not complaiſance enough to admire their follies, nor meanneſs enough, like ſome fops of the age, not only to give them approbation, but to demand it of them in their turn: Such, I mean, as affect to entertain them in their cloſets with pieces of eloquence and poetry, as if they could judge of the defects or perfection of any work; as if they who know not a ſingle rule of rhetoric could at all judge of the obſervance or violation of ſuch rules.

It

It is true, we ſometimes meet with women of a noble ſpirit, whoſe converſation is moſt agreeable, and whoſe advice is not leſs uſeful than their approbation glorious; but it is not the coquette that we muſt addreſs, or the affected that we muſt conſult, but in matters of tittle-tattle, faſhion, or grimace; yet even theſe can find their admirers, nay more, even ſuch as imitate them; for there is affectation in men as well as in women.

Pompey was formerly accuſed of being too great a beau, having the appearance of a fop rather than of a *Roman* knight; and yet *Clodius*, in deſcribing him, reproaches him of nothing more, than *of ſcratching his head with one finger* *; for fear of diſcommoding his curls. I need not ſay how much further in effeminacy the fops have gone ſince his time.

Who are they, ſaith *Seneca*, in mockery of theſe coxcombs, *that had rather ſee their eſtates in diſorder than their locks? Who are more concern'd for the outward beauty than the inward ſoundneſs of their head? And who paſs the chief part of their time between the comb and the glaſs, in order to appear ſmart and ſpruce in the eyes of the ladies?*

Pompey's body-guard ſeem to be of this caſt; who in the heat of the battle clapt up their hands to ſave their faces; being more con-

* Τίς ἐνὶ δακτύλῳ κνᾶται τὴν κεφαλήν; *Plutarch.* in vita *Pompeii.*

cern'd for their beauty than for the good of the public, or the honour of their general. Such was *Seneca*'s opinion of male-coquets; it is not an hermit that decries them but a courtier; it is not a preacher but a philoſopher; it is not a chriſtian but an heathen that condemns them.

Men of ſenſe have always deſpis'd the affectation of coquettes, and upon examination we ſhall find that they never had any admirers but the ignorant or vitious, or ſuch as are intereſted in their favour. They would certainly renounce this vice, if they could ſee what a jeſt they are to others; and perhaps they would return to the laudable ſimplicity of former ages, and modeſty would be more in practice with their ſex, if it were in more eſteem with ours. But if coquetry comes from the vanity of ſome women, it is kept up by the complaiſance and imitation of ſome men; and it ſeems almoſt neceſſary for the good of the public, that we ſhould behave towards women ſo affected, as *Jehu* did to *Jeſabel* *.

This old lady having ſtill a mind to appear fair and agreeable, *had painted her face, and tired her head, and was looking out at a window for admirers*; when *Jehu* order'd her to be thrown down, and that *the word of the Lord, which he ſpake by his ſervant* Elijah *the prophet might be fulfilled*, ſhe became the *food of dogs*,

* 2 Kings ix.

who

who had been the terror and ſcandal of her people. I think proper to conclude with this example, as it is drawn from the holy ſcripture, and it may ſerve for a recapitulation of this diſcourſe, as it not only ſhews in what contempt ſuch coquettes were held by men of courage, but every other circumſtance in their deſigns, their malice, and their life.

When this queen had an intention to murder the innocent; ſhe order'd a ſolemn faſt throughout the realm *; and is it not a common artifice of the affected to conceal their bad deſigns under a fair appearance? See we not even in our own days thoſe who endeavour to blend coquetry with devotion; and ſcruple not to place upon the ſame altar the ark of God and the idols of the heathens?

This queen took more pains to be agreeable to a ſtranger than to her husband; ſhe uſed more art to engage *Jehu* than to pleaſe *Ahab*. Thus act coquettes; they dreſs not but for their galants; or ſhould they have any deſign to pleaſe their husbands, they would need more perſuaſions and menaces to oblige them to decency than to keep them from affectation.

Jeſabel lov'd nothing but her pleaſures; and ſo accommodated herſelf to the times and the views of intereſt, that having ſeen her ſon † ſlain, ſhe even made court to his murderer. Such is

* 1 Kings xxi. 9.

† *Joram* the ſon of *Ahab* ſlain by *Jehu*, 2 Kings ix. 24.

the natural diſpoſition of a coquette, that ſhe hath no true affection for any one; if there ever was a generous one among them it was *Cleopatra*; and yet when ſhe ſaw that *Marc Antony* was ruin'd, ſhe privately order'd her equipage to be got ready, in order to fly and leave him to his conquerors, giving it out that ſhe was dead.

Jeſabel encouraged her husband in a bad action; and when he made a conſcience of taking away his ſubjects property by force, ſhe immediately eaſed him of his ſcruples, and inſtigated him to oppreſſion and murder *. The vitiouſly affected are always violent in their counſels; they reign not but tyrannically; and we may juſtly ſay, that *Poppea* was more cruel than *Nero* himſelf. See we not alſo in the goſpel a coquette, who demanded for the wages of her dance and impudence nothing but the head of a prophet when ſhe was offer'd half the kingdom †? This is what they delight in, the deſtruction of good men; and it is hard to ſay, whether the husband, if of a good diſpoſition, or the galant of a coquette, is in the greateſt danger.

Yet further, fully to deſcribe the effects of coquetry in that of *Jeſabel*, I ſhall conclude with the malady that laſted all her life, and which ſeems incurable in ſuch of the ſex as re-

* 1 Kings xxii.

† Matth. xiv. 8. Mark vi. 14. Luke ix. 7.

ſemble

ſemble her. Aged as ſhe was, ſhe would fain be thought handſom, and never uſed more art and affectation than now; ſhe fancied ſhe had ſtill charms enough to vanquiſh her enemy, as *Phrynè* did her judges. But alas! it was of no avail to ſhew herſelf now; her beauty was gone, and her reign, which needed no guards to preſerve it, was over. Thus coquettes have always affected to appear young; nor is it of to-day only that ſome women labour under this anxiety.

There have been times when the fear of being thought old was ſo univerſal, that they could not find a perſon who would act the part of an old-woman even in comedy. The emperors were oblig'd to make uſe of their authority, and compel ſome one to this task, who was under ſentence of baniſhment or condemn'd to ſome puniſhment. It was puniſhment enough only to feign being old, and none but criminals could be prevail'd upon to undertake it. *Strange blindneſs*, ſaith *Tertullian*, ſpeaking of coquettes, *they pray to God, if they ever pray at all, that he would give them a long life, and yet they are aſham'd of being old* *.

There is nothing they will not do to hide their age; but of what ſervice is all their art? Let them borrow another complexion or buy other locks, they cannot buy or borrow other

* Proh Temeritas! erubeſcit ætas exoptata votis. Tertull. de cultu fœm. ii 6.

eyes.

eyes. Here their age will diſcover itſelf do what they can to conceal it; the paint that covers their wrinkles cannot diſguiſe either their vanity or their years. We judge of the diſeaſe by the remedy; we ſee at the ſame time their age and their deſign to hide it, ſo that inſtead of inviting a reſpective pity, were they humble, they rather cauſe horror, ſeeing they are ſtill ſo vain and affected.

They make themſelves ridiculous, and you ſhall ſcarce ever hear of an old coquette's ſucceeding like *Archenaſſa*, whom *Plato* fell in love with, tho' ſhe was well ſtricken with age; many like her attempt ſucceſs, but few are ſo happy. There are thoſe however, who having been tired with courtiers are content to take up with philoſophers, if they can get them. When they can no longer pride themſelves in their beauty, they make a ſhew of their eloquence; they become Sibyls after having been celebrated nymphs; they quit not their coquetry, but only refine it; they convert it, as it were, to the viſage of the mind.

Upon obſervation of the world we ſhall find there are many ſuch who never fail to plead their abilities, and to ſhew from ſome common-place arguments, that the converſation of a ſenſible woman is infinitely preferable to the ſight of a pretty face; that there is not leſs pleaſure in ſeeing a fine picture than a beautiful mute; and that the judgment of *Paris* was truly

truly the judgment of a ſhepherd, when he gave not the apple to *Pallas* rather than to *Venus:* But whatever they may ſay, the three goddeſſes were but ſo many coquettes; one in riches as *Juno*, another in beauty as *Venus*, and another in learning as *Pallas*. I know not which is worſt; I blame them all alike from their preferring themſelves to one another; and there may be as much affectation in the pride of the mind as in that of beauty or grandeur.

There may however be ſome modeſty, or at leaſt ſome addreſs in thoſe who affect not to paſs for beauties, when nature hath not given them this advantage, or old age hath deprived them of it. Tho' they may pride themſelves ſomewhat more than becomes them in their learning, yet they never give us ſo much averſion, as thoſe who are like *Jeſabel* and make uſe of all mnnner of affectation to hide their defects, inſtead of making themſelves tolerable by their modeſty. Theſe never reform; their coquetry laſts for ever, as well as the deſire to be thought handſom.

How contrary is affectation to the decent gravity of old age! How ridiculous are women when they pretend to play the baby, tho' they are as old as *Jeſabel!* To obſerve the countenance of ſome of them, and to judge of their demeanour, looks, and dreſs, we ſhall really think that coquettes are a new ſort of *demoniacs*, who

who have more need of exorciſts than of galants.

Coquetry, I ſay, ſeems in many an incurable evil; tho' to cure it, if poſſible, nothing is more likely than the conſideration of the end that theſe inſolents often come to. The end of *Jeſabel* ought to terrify them. This example ſeem'd ſo ſtrong to St. *Gregory Nazianzen*, that he made uſe of it in a poem he wrote againſt ſuch coquettes as were too curious in their ornaments and proud of their beauty; he compares *Jeſabel* with *Eſther*, and ſaith, as the one is the true pourtrait of modeſty, the other is the picture of affectation.

Theſe two queens, he adds, *tho' alike in condition, were very different in their inclinations and fortune*; Eſther, *with the native beauty of her countenance, charm'd the great king* Ahaſuerus; Jeſabel *with all her art only heighten'd the rage of* Jehu; Jeſabel *is thrown headlong from a window, where ſhe ſtood to ſhew herſelf with the painted face of a coquette*; Eſther *was advanced to a throne, to which ſhe ſcarce dared to lift up her eyes, and was afraid of being too bold in calling herſelf the ſervant of a prince, who deign'd her worthy to be his wife.* Eſther *ſaved her nation, and* Jeſabel *was the ruin and ſhame of her people.*

Theſe then are two the moſt notable examples, that women can propoſe to themſelves of unaffected.

unaffected beauty and a coquette: Let them conſider theſe two pourtraits, and examine without prejudice, which of theſe two queens they had rather reſemble. Let them afterwards reflect upon the abhorrence that the pagans themſelves had for affectation; and the more to avoid it, let them remember at leaſt that they are chriſtians and therefore much more obliged to be modeſt than were *Poppea* or *Cleopatra*; that the modeſty demanded of them is nothing more than what the heathens themſelves requir'd to form the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN in their time; and that, as among chriſtians, religion approves not of affectation, among the heathens reaſon alone condemn'd it. In ſhort, let them call to mind that in the times of the primitive church chriſtian women were known by the ſedateneſs of their countenance. They need only look upon *Græcina* * in *Tacitus*, who is accus'd of being baptis'd, as many of the fathers obſerve, only from the decent modeſty of her deportment, her dreſs, and her countenance.

Let not what I have ſaid however ſtartle any one. Not to be a coquette, there is no need of renouncing all agreeableneſs, but only vanity; they muſt quit affectation but not gentility. *Aſella*,

* *Pomponia Græcina*, the wife of *Plautius*, who at his return from *Britain*, having aſſembled her kindred, and taken cogniſance of the behaviour and reputation of his wife, adjudg'd her innocent. Tacit. Annal. 13.

ſaith

ſaith St. *Jerom, was modeſt, but nothing ſeem'd ſo joyous with her as her ſeverity, nothing ſo ſevere as her gaiety: There was nothing ſo ſweet as her reſervedneſs, nothing ſo reſerv'd as her ſweetneſs*; there was nothing therefore that could be cenſur'd in her; ſo well ſhe knew to blend a courteous behaviour with probity; and indeed, may not a woman be extremely agreeable, without employing ſo much art and conſtraint as ſome do?

Let it not be objected, that the outward looks depend not always upon ourſelves, and that ſome women may have the appearance of coquettes, tho' they are far from being ſo in reality. I own, that ſome are very unhappy in their looks, and that they may ſometimes have too ſprightly and bold an air outwardly, when thy are all modeſty within: I know that women may be coquettes different ways, ſome by deſign, others through ignorance, and others by misfortune; by deſign, when they ſtudy airs and graces to pleaſe every beholder; through ignorance, when not knowing what is proper to behaviour they become affected, tho' their intentions are innocent; and by misfortune, when not being guilty either by ignorance or deſign, they have nevertheleſs the face of a coquette when their mind is very different. It may be ſaid perhaps that we ought to puniſh the firſt, inſtruct the ſecond, and pity the laſt.

No;

No; there is no great occaſion to pity them; beſides the conſideration which they have in the teſtimony of their conſcience, they have alſo this advantage, that they can eaſily undeceive us by only making themſelves known. They are the very contrary of hypocrites, who conceal their inward pride and inſolence under a demure countenance; they may therefore ſeek the light while hypocrites do all they can to ſhun it; they are not concern'd at our taking off the mask, ſince they acquire reputation by the ſame means the other loſe it: They are not afraid to ſtand trial; ſo that it is no leſs error to condemn them than to approve of hypocrites.

They have ſtill another happineſs; experience not only juſtifies them, but confirms their reputation; ſuch as are undeceiv'd in their opinion of them, dare not afterwards judge of them lightly; and having once been in doubt, we have now a ſtronger belief of their modeſty. We are very ready to ask their pardon for the leaſt ſuſpicion of their innocence; and ſhould they afterwards commit a fault, there would need very ſtrong proofs to condemn them; and having before too lightly judg'd from appearances, it would be difficult for us now even to believe the truth.

We are not long in being undeceiv'd; whatever freedoms any one may entertain in thought, provided there is modeſty in the ſoul,

ſoul, it will always throw out ſome rays above. Experience ſometimes ſhews us that the ſigns of the countenance are falſe; but there is nothing ſo eaſy as to know in converſation, whether women who ſeem coquettes are really ſo; we need only to obſerve whether they are eaſily exaſperated, and may judge of their modeſty by their patience: Such as are not coquettes are not offended at reproof, but coquettes cannot bear it; they take pet at every little offence or reprehenſion; and as they fly the light that betrays the defects of their face, they hate the truth which diſcovers thoſe of their mind.

Herein again they reſemble *Jeſabel*, who ſlew the prophets and could not endure any one about her but flatterers; but let them take it as ill as they pleaſe, I beg to be excuſed ſhewing them any more favour than I did the diſſolute. I oppoſe nothing but vice, and think I cannot enough praiſe *Eſther* and *Octavia*, while I condemn *Poppea*, *Cleopatra* and *Jeſabel*. There is no tract in this book, which I think ought more to pleaſe an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN than this; as there is nothing ſo contrary to them as affectation, and as there are even virtuous women, who are ſometimes conſtrain'd not to appear of ſo pleaſant a humour, as they might without any offence to virtue, for fear only of being ſuſpected of coquetry; they had rather ſtand the chance of appearing auſtere than affected, and think that with regard to modeſty,

modeſty, there is leſs ſhame in being accuſed of exceſs than defect.

Such then is my opinion of vice, without any fear of offending the vitious: I deſpiſe approbation from thoſe to whom I can give none myſelf; and I ſhall always have this advantage, that the averſion I have for their boldneſs is greater and more juſt than the diſlike they can have to my freedom. And was I ſo mean as to fear them, this thought would comfort me, that moſt coquettes think not that they are ſo themſelves: And I am perſuaded I ſhall create no enemies, when they who are moſt guilty of this fault, will readily enough help me to condemn that in another, which flattery and ſelf-love hinder them from acknowledging in their own actions, deportment, and countenance.

CHAP. X.

Of the EMPLOY *of an Accompliſh'd* WOMAN.

A DISCOURSE on loiterers will properly follow one on coquettes, this ſubject being a ſequel of the foregoing; for ſtrictly to remark all the time that is ſpent in affectation, can we think otherwiſe of it than of ſo much time loſt? And fully

fully to examine the ridiculous employ of many women, and their ſuperfluous exerciſes, ſeems not their whole life but a long idleneſs or a long infancy? It may not perhaps be leſs innocent than that of children, yet it is ſeldom more ſerious or more uſeful. What difference is there between a child that dreſſeth and undreſſeth her baby, and thoſe who paſs the greateſt part of the day at the glaſs, in beholding and ſetting themſelves in order? Surely their folly is more ſhameful and more ridiculous; as they are under a greater obligation to employ their time, they are much more guilty in loſing it.

Were we to judge from ſome women of all the reſt, we ſhould be apt to think that half of the human race were paralytic, and that but one part of the ſpecies are engaged in buſineſs. While men ſpend their whole life in ſtudy, in magiſtracy, in navigation, or in the army; the women, I am ſpeaking of, employ their whole time in dreſſing themſelves, in walking, in goſſiping, or play. But were they born for this purpoſe? To ſee them never otherwiſe engaged than in ſuch trifling affairs, will any one ſay that they have a ſoul as capable of deſign and inſtruction as ours?

Plato, in his ſeventh book *of laws*, would have them employ'd in the ſame exerciſes as men are, and endeavours to prove that they are not leſs capable; *For in ſo doing*, ſaith he, *every city would double its hands, and would gain*

a ſet of people without any addition to the number of its inhabitants. This would be the means of increaſing the world one half, not by multiplying, but only employing them. Such is the ſentiment of this philoſopher, and even with regard to military exerciſe, of which he thinks them as capable as men; but if his opinion be not juſt with regard to arms, and his endeavour to renew the kingdom of the *Amazons*, at leaſt it cannot be denied, but that it would be very reaſonable with regard to many other employments, wherein women might make themſelves uſeful to the public, inſtead of living, as ſome of them do, in unprofitable idleneſs. If they are not born with a body robuſt enough for war, at leaſt they are born with a ſoul as capable of giving or receiving good inſtructions as the ſoul of men: But further I ſay, they are born under an equal obligation to employ their time; and I ſtill add, that in every age where they have intended to form an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, there is no ſign of their having any regard for an idle one.

But why, ſome will ſay, do not women take pains enough already? Is there any reaſon to complain of their being idle? Is not the time employ'd that is ſpent in company? 'Tis true, it is doing ſomething were it only talking; but if this be vain and unprofitable, it is counted for nothing: For nothing? No; it is counted for ſin; ſince it is not enough to abſtain

ſtain from evil actions, but we are obliged to do good. We are as workmen for hire, whoſe duty it is not only not to loſe their time, but alſo not to employ it in any other buſineſs than what they are ſet about. We are as culpable for doing what is unneceſſary, as for not doing any thing at all.

I ſay the ſame of thoughts as of words, and condemn not only the diſcourſe, but alſo the meditation that is vain and uſeleſs. As we ought not to ſpeak, we ought not to think any thing but what is good; if our ſoul ſhould not conceive any thing but what is profitable, our mouth ſhould not utter any thing that is ſuperfluous. We muſt dive into the heart to know the origin of evil, and not look for purity in the river whoſe ſpring we know is poiſon'd. There are idle thoughts therefore as well as idle words, and we are not leſs forbidden to think than to talk unprofitably. As the action of the ſoul is more precious than that of the body, we are oblig'd to give it a more exalted object and an end more excellent.

Obſerve, if you pleaſe, that our mind, like the vital heat, acts inceſſantly; and if we will not give it a good ſubject to work upon, it will undoubtedly lay hold on what is bad; it is like the ſtomach, which fills itſelf with groſs humours when wholſom aliment is wanting.

Yet more, all evil comes not from this ſource only. The malice of our arch-enemy makes

makes uſe of our inclinations to accompliſh our perdition: That our ſpirit which acts inceſſantly may forego its neceſſary employ, he endeavours by all means to amuſe it with what is uſeleſs; he acts by thoſe whom he would divert from good works, as the tyrants of *Ægypt* did by the *Iſraelites*; they muſt be always employ'd to keep them from being rebellious, and to prevent their having time or means to recover their liberty: They are ſcarce allow'd time to breathe, and are commanded the moſt low and frivolous tasks, be it to gather ſtraw or count the bricks.

Such is the artifice of our principal enemy to divert us from every holy employ; he makes us paſs away our time in trifles, that we may not be at leiſure to acquit ourſelves of our duty. Such is his tyranny and cunning; he keeps us inceſſantly engaged in ſome unprofitable buſineſs, as under a yoke, which hinders us from reflecting upon ourſelves, and ſeeing the ſhameful tendency of our actions; or rather we ought to ſay he amuſes us than that he employs us. It is the moſt dangerous as well as the moſt common craftineſs of this our foe; that, not being able to prevent the inclination we have to good, he gives us no time to think of it and put it in practice; he takes away all opportunity of employing the time but ſuch as tends to loſing it.

Indeed,

Indeed, women are employ'd; but in what? I believe there is ſcarce any thought that would confound them more than this, were they to examine well how they ſpend the greateſt part of the day; they would then learn what it is that hinders them from allowing at leaſt ſome part of it to reading, and profitable converſation, when they find they have ſpent the whole in prattling, play, or other fruitleſs exerciſes. This then is the chief effect of idleneſs, which at firſt blinds us, and then buſies us in ſomething ſuperfluous, that we may not think on what is neceſſary.

It begins in the forgetfulneſs of our duty. They who are diſeaſed with this languor, have no more taſte of good actions than thoſe who are in a ſlow fever have of good nouriſhment. Of all perſons, of all books, and of all exerciſes, they take delight in the moſt uſeleſs. All buſineſs from whence profit may accrue is diſagreeable to them; thus idleneſs blinds their eyes before it ties up their hands; thus it deprives them of action, having firſt deprived them of underſtanding. Hence, of all women none are more imprudent than the idle; they are aſtoniſhed and ſurpriſed at every accident, becauſe there is not one for which they are prepared. It is not the lightning, but only the clap of thunder, that awakens them; it is not forecaſt that affects them, but repentance; they

they regard not the arrival of opportunity, but the ſequel.

They are like the fooliſh virgins *, who ſlept when they ought to have watched, and who have their oil to ſeek, when their lamps ought to have been lighted. If they awake, it is too late; if they chance to half-open their eyes, it is but to cloſe them again for a long while. They ſometimes think they ought to break the chains that hold them, and ſeem deſirous to employ themſelves in ſomething uſeful, but never any effect follows their reſolution: They continually ſtir themſelves, as perſons who cannot ſleep do in their bed; not in order to riſe, but to fling themſelves into a ſound ſleep.

They ſometimes indeed ſeem prepared for action; but they are like oſtriches, which extend their wings and yet fly not, or ſcarce raiſe themſelves from the ground. *The ſlothful*, ſaith *Solomon*, *turneth upon his bed, as a door upon his hinges* †; which if you open or ſhut, as much as you pleaſe, it ſtill remains in the ſame place. *Sluggards*, ſaith he elſewhere, *will and will not*; if they take up a reſolution, they ſoon change it for one quite contrary; they cannot act when they would, becauſe they would not when it was their duty.

Negligence that is born of idleneſs hath for its common companions irreſolution and incon-

* Matth. xxv. 1.

† Prov. xxvi. 14.

ſtancy; ſuch as are infected with it have nó ſooner any deſign than they alter it; they lay many foundations but never build thereon; they have no fix'd reſolution; they never ſay, *I will*, but *I would:* Their will always fluctuates; they have no deſires, but only wiſhes; not one of their motions is progreſſive, if I may ſo ſpeak, but always circular; they make many a tour, but never any voyage; they advance no further than a man does in a labyrinth.

And indeed what progreſs can there be in the work of any perſon, who propoſeth to himſelf nó other end or deſign but that of loſing his time? The idle are like archers, who continually draw their bow without having any mark, and who loſe as many arrows as they let fly; they are ſhips that float at the mercy of the winds, without propoſing any haven, or obſerving the pole-ſtar or north-wind. Provided they live from night to morn it is enough; it imports nothing what became of the time ſo that it be paſſed; it never ſeems ſhorter than when it is loſt. The pains ſome women take to paſs away their days make them ſeem long; they are ſo ſolicitous after recreation, that they can enjoy none. When they run after diverſions, they are like thoſe who are continually ſtuffing themſelves with medicines; and as theſe but heighten the maladies they intended to remedy, the other only increaſe the vexation they would fain get rid of.

Idleneſs is melancholy in the midſt of her paſtimes; ſhe is ever diſcontented with herſelf; ſhe falls under her own weight; ſhe is diſpleas'd with every thing becauſe ſhe applies herſelf to nothing: Whereas ſhe ought to conſider, that as hunger gives a goût to our daily food, labour gives a reliſh to our nightly reſt. What a hindrance is idleneſs to herſelf! What pains does ſhe take in doing nothing! How is ſhe chagrin'd at her own diverſions! After all, we muſt do ſomething in ſpite of ourſelves, in order to find a pleaſure in doing nothing. Buſineſs cures us of diſquiet as reſt does of wearineſs; but we reverſe the order: being born as it were to reſt ourſelves a little after much labour, we after a very little labour take a great deal of reſt; yet it is not enough to ſay, that labour is neceſſary to ſhun anxiety, but alſo to ſhun vice, or at leaſt the opportunity of committing ſin.

Religion ſpeaks in a different manner concerning good works than reaſon alone; it not only blames idleneſs, but makes it puniſhable; it does not reſtrain us from paſſing away the time, but from loſing it. God hath to no one given life to be employ'd unprofitably; whether he treats us as mercenaries or as children; whether he gives us heaven as an inheritance or as a reward; he would always have us work as he himſelf worketh. To animate us he hath given us both his commandment and his ex-

ample; in working we imitate him as our father, or ſerve him as our maſter. This law allows not of any diſpenſation whatever, either on account of the advantages of birth or fortune.

But in what ſhall women of condition employ their time? Let them accept of an anſwer from a great perſonage; let them take St. *Jerom*, who in his writings hath given ſo many good inſtructions to women, as their director in this affair: When he teaches *Paula* a *Roman* lady, how to paſs her time agreeably and innocently, he adviſeth her never to be idle, but always to be employ'd in ſome decent exerciſe; he would have her work with her own hands. *Were you born*, ſays he, *of the race of the* Scipios *or* Gracchi, *and tho' your anceſtors bore in their arms the figure of* Agamemnon, *who was called the king of kings, you ought ſtill to ſpin wool, and work as others do; your high birth will by no means excuſe you from all manner of employ; nor ought you to bluſh at holding the ſpinning-wheel or the needle; or to be aſhamed of employing therewith the hands that ſeem deſtin'd to wield a ſcepter.* Such was the opinion of this good man, who, writing to another lady on the ſame ſubject, promiſeth to ſhew her the way to live without anxiety or ſin, and aſſures her that there needs nothing more for this purpoſe than to apply herſelf to reading, prayer, and good works; and that theſe three employ-

ments

ments will always prevent the time from ſeeming long.

It is true, he wrote to ladies who had asked his advice with regard to the education of a daughter according to chriſtian morality, and not according to the cuſtom of the world: Some therefore will ſay, that this is the opinion of a monk, and more proper for a nunnery than the court: But let me tell them by way of anſwer, that this great man knew as well the laws of decency as thoſe of devotion; and that in all his diſcourſe to this lady, he ſhews not the leaſt ſigns of monaſtic auſterity. But ſuppoſing, that a Gentlewoman of this age ſhould think this ſchool ſomewhat too ſevere for her to govern herſelf by; and that ſhe would be inſtructed not in that of chriſtians but of the *Gentiles* only; to know then how women ought to ſpend their time, let her not conſult St. *Jerom* but *Seneca*, and ſhe will find that it is not religion but mere natural reaſon that condemns idleneſs. Let her read in *Livy* the praiſes of *Tanaquil* the wife of the elder *Tarquin* *. All the world knows how illuſtrious this princeſs made herſelf by her generous ſpirit, her great courage, and incomparable prudence; and yet the *Romans* intending to do honour to her memory, cauſed a ſtatue to be made of her with a diſtaff in her hand. They might juſtly have given her a ſword on account of her valour, or

* Liv. lib. i. cap. 34. Juv. vi. 565.

a ſcepter on the account of her conduct and diſcretion. She was polite, victorious, and learned, and yet her ſtatue was adorn'd with nothing more than a diſtaff: We muſt think therefore that the greateſt ſign that could be given of her virtue was to ſhew that ſhe never loſt any time, and that ſhe was never idle. It is well known what ſhe did for the preſervation of the ſtate; 'tis manifeſt from hence, that notwithſtanding her application to the greateſt affairs ſhe neglected not the leaſt.

Herein then ſhe was praiſe-worthy in not deſpiſing the ordinary employ of other women, even after ſhe had buſied her mind with matters of the greateſt conſequence: She was not like thoſe coquettes, who glory in renouncing the exerciſes proper for their ſex, only becauſe they are in uſe with women of leſs fortune.

But this only evidenceth how ſmall their merit; perſons of the greateſt talents in either ſex ought ſometimes to apply themſelves to matters of little conſequence, as well as to ſuch as are more noble and important. *Plutarch* obſerves that when the dictators were elected, it was the cuſtom to viſit the geeſe in the capitol to ſee if they wanted any thing, after having viſited the temples to ſee if the ſtatues of the gods were in good order; to ſhew them hat nothing relating to their office ſhould benegl e cted, and that the greateſt perſonages ought

ought not to contemn the affairs which ſeem of the leaſt importance.

It is not an employ unworthy a woman to ſpin, or the like gentle exerciſe; it is not below their ſex, nor an affair of little importance to ſtudy the means of ſhunning idleneſs. There is no time to be loſt; it is ſo great a good, that every part of it is valuable. She that can loſe an hour can loſe a day. We are prodigal of a treaſure, of which we ought to be moſt covetous; the wiſeſt of kings in deſcribing an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN of his time, abridgeth as it were all her good qualities in ſaying, that *in her hands ſhe holds the diſtaff* *, after having employed herſelf in the moſt noble and generous actions.

The *Romans* could give no ſtronger teſtimony of virtue in woman than by ſignifying that ſhe always employ'd her time; for ſince it is difficult to be chaſte and idle at the ſame time, what greater praiſe can a woman receive than that which they beſtowed on *Tanaquil?* But were we to equip the ſtatues of ſome women in this age, the propereſt *Inſignia* would be cards, dice, fans, mirrours, or the like trifling amuſement of loiterers.

I might here ſpeak of the moſt dangerous effects of idleneſs, but have in a former diſcourſe † treated on this ſubject; and therefore, in order

* Prov. xxxi. 19.

† On diſſolute women.

to oblige them always to find out ſome decent employ, ſhall only ſet before them the examples of the poet's *Clytemneſtra* *, who was hainouſly diſhoneſt becauſe ſhe was idle; and of *Penelope*, who unravel'd her work as ſoon as ſhe had done it, becauſe ſhe would not be unemploy'd; and in all likelihood had not held out ſo long amidſt ſo many ſuiters, had ſhe indulg'd herſelf with leiſure hours.

Such is the ſentiment of every age and the experience of all nations with regard to idleneſs; this is what we learn from the *Grecian* as well as from the *Roman* hiſtory. When *Alexander* intended a preſent for ſome ladies of *Perſia*, he could not find any thing among all his moveables of higher value or more worthy for him to give than the robes and veſtments which his mother and ſiſters had worked with their own hands †. The greateſt princeſſes were not aſham'd to work in thoſe days, and to apply themſelves to ſuch tasks as are now only thought proper for thoſe women who muſt thereby earn their bread; as if idleneſs was not alike forbidden to all the world, or that it was permitted the rich to loſe their time, tho' not the poor.

What fault can be found with the examples here given? The women I propoſe were as re-

* The wife of *Agamemnon*, who was conſenting to his murder by her galant *Ægiſthus*. Juv. xvi. 656.

† Quint. Curt. lib. 5. cap. 8.

markable

markable for their high birth, as their good underſtanding. I have not drawn the models from ſhops or ſtalls, but from the courts of the greateſt princeſſes in the world: I am not ſpeaking of ſuch women as are obliged to work through neceſſity, but of ſuch as employ themſelves only to ſhun vice. If *Alexander* was aſhamed to contend in the olympic games, becauſe there were no kings to match him *; ſurely the women of theſe days ought not to be aſhamed of engaging themſelves in ſome decent employ, when they find it is what the moſt illuſtrious ladies and greateſt queens have done before. This law, as before obſerv'd, gives no diſpenſation; there can be no excuſe for idleneſs, ſince there are ſo many ſorts of work wherein they may be honourably employ'd.

Neither are they commanded always to have a book or ſome needlework in their hands. After the time that is due for the obſervation of the laws, either human or divine, we may adapt our buſineſs to our humour, and chooſe the exerciſe that is moſt agreeable: Tho' I commend the labour of the hands, I do not mean that this ſhould take up their whole time; I eſteem more the labour of the mind than that of the body, and cannot think the life of thoſe who ſpend much time in meditation, an idle life. I know that the moſt commendable actions of a man are not

* See *Plutarch* in the life of *Alexander*.

thoſe of the hands but thoſe of the ſoul; and that the philoſopher labours more gloriouſly in the work of contemplation than the peaſant in agriculture.

I add alſo that the action of the ſoul is not leſs true than that of the body, but only leſs groſs; the internal work is not leſs ſolid for being leſs material or leſs viſible. The moſt noble employ of man depends upon a faculty, which tyrants themſelves cannot prevent from acting. We can love and meditate even in bonds; contemplation is always in our power: And the action which is moſt excellent and noble, is alſo the moſt eaſy and free. If ſome may want hands to act, there is no one that wants a will; and if fortune can prevent us from being liberal, ſhe cannot hinder us from being compaſſionate.

I do not call it therefore being idle to contemplate the works of God or to love him; nor do I think it neceſſary always to be employ'd in ſome work or other. The precept of labour is much more eaſy than I have deſcribed it; if buſineſs is commanded in order to avoid ſin, diverſions are permitted in order to avoid heavineſs and anxiety. The maſter whom we ſerve is by no means froward; he permits decent ſports and innocent recreations; but what do I ſay? He not only permits them, but gives them a reward in the refreſhment of our

our ſpirits for his ſervice, provided that our intentions are juſt and well regulated.

Let none think therefore, that by employing their time, I mean they ſhould always have the ſpinning-wheel before them, or be always buſied in reading, meditation, or prayer; or that to be an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN they muſt renounce all ſorts of pleaſure. I oppoſe not recreation, but on the contrary think it abſolutely neceſſary, and very often innocent; it is an aſſiſtant to virtue, when moderate, tho' it corrupts it when exceſſive. I know that our ſtrength is not infinite, and that we muſt ſometimes take breath, to be afterwards more capable of applying ourſelves to virtuous actions; I blame thoſe ſullen humours, that are for ever ſpoiling converſation, by the averſion they affect to all manner of paſtime. They are like that tree in the *Indies*, which they call *Triſte* or *Sorrowful*, which never bloſſoms but in the night, and whoſe leaves all fall off at the riſing of the ſun, as if it put on mourning at the appearance of that luminary, or could not endure the light. I own that ſuch gloomy tempers are not the moſt proper for virtue, and that their heavineſs comes ſometimes from a bad cauſe, or is the ſign of ſome bad intention.

I own too that temperance is concern'd in moderating ſorrow as well as joy; that morality may be offended by defect as well as by exceſs in what regards our diverſions; and that

that the proper mean herein is a virtue which *Thomas Aquinas* calls *eutrapely*, that is, *urbanity* or *pleaſantry*.

I know that the learned Monſieur *de Sales* hath left in his writings, that balls and plays are things indifferent, and that he even maintain'd this doctrine when it had given offence. Neither have I attack'd plays or other public diverſions, but only the exceſs or diſorders they oftentimes create.

For what need is there of any thing more than ſuch paſtimes as are neceſſary and decent? What need is there to have the cards or dice always in our hands, and to make a toil of diverſion? What can be more ſhameful than to acquire the reputation of a gay lady? If they are not grown ſtubborn in evil let them reflect on the danger they are ruſhing into by the neglect of their duty; by leaving their children without inſtruction, their family without conduct, and ſometimes their husbands without affection. But ſhould it not be ſo, let them only reflect on the time they have loſt.

Let them not think on the opportunities that play gives them of doing evil, but on thoſe they loſe of doing good: Let them be aſhamed of ſaying as they generally do, *How ſhall we paſs the day?* Since to ſpeak in this manner is to forget what chriſtianity requires of us; it is to forget that we have good works to do, and ſtrong paſſions to overcome; in ſhort, it is to forget

forget that on the loſs of time depends that of eternity.

CHAP. XI.

Of the TEMPERANCE *of* WOMEN.

PLEASURE corrupts us not in ſo delicate a manner as vanity; this puts out our eyes with glare and lightning, the other with clay and dirt It ſeems as if there was leſs ſhame in being blinded like *Phaeton* than as the companions of *Ulyſſes* *. When this infamous *Circè* inchants us, tho' we ſtill retain the figure of men, we loſe at leaſt the ſenſe of men; our paſſions become altogether brutal; ſhe makes a different metamorphoſis in us than that of the *Greeks*; as they ſtill kept their reaſon in the form of beaſts, we have a beaſtly ſoul under the viſage of man. Pleaſure does more harm than *Circè* did *Grillus* †; ſhe only took from him the appearance of a man, but this deprives us of reaſon itſelf, and lowers us to the rank of brutes. Intemperance therefore is the moſt ſhameful if it be not the moſt culpable; the deſire of raiſing ourſelves by the way of honour is not ſo con-

* Hom. Odyſſ. 10. ver 230. Ovid Met. lib. 14. 260.

† See the diſcourſe in *Plutarch*, intitled *Grillus*; wherein it is diſcuſſed, *whether brutes have the uſe of reaſon.*

trary

trary to man as that of debaſing ourſelves by vitious pleaſure; if vanity be too imaginary, pleaſure is too material. Tho' this reaſoning ſeems to regard one ſex as well as the other, yet women have the more concern in it, ſince purity and decency are for them more neceſſary. It is more ſhameful to be voluptuous than vain; intemperance much worſe becomes them than us, and tho' the ſin be equal, the ſhame is not ſo. If courage is the property of men, purity is that of women; this virtue therefore ſeems the moſt ſpiritual of all the reſt, as it draws us from material objects. Courage fortifies, juſtice directs, prudence inlightens, but temperance purifies, and ſubtiliſeth as it were the body itſelf.

What modeſty or decency can we expect from the voluptuous? Or what can we think of thoſe who lay out ſo much pains on their perſons, but that they are fattening a victim for a ſacrifice to the goddeſs Pleaſure. Such delicate finery is ominous; it is contrary to virtue without being at all neceſſary for the health. Nay, it muſt be a poiſon when it is not a remedy: For how can chaſtity preſerve itſelf amidſt ſo much ſoftneſs and luxury? *The righteous*, ſaith the ſcripture*, *ſhall flouriſh like a palm-tree*; and the palm, we know, never thrives more than in a barren and dry ground; ſo it is with chaſtity, it ſtrikes a deeper root in mortification than in pleaſure. It is a celeſtial tree,

* Pſal. xcii. 12.

which

which receives its nouriſhment from the dew of heaven, and not from the fat of the earth.

Examine all the moral virtues, there is not one but what ſtands in need of temperance; without this prudence is ſubject to error, courage to raſhneſs, and juſtice to corruption. Temperance is as the *materia prima*, from whence are drawn all the moral forms; it is the mother of the virtues and their nurſe; above all, there is nothing ſo contrary to chaſtity as pleaſure. And *Juvenal* had reaſon to ſay, *That the reign of chaſtity laſted no longer than that of ſobriety and abſtinence; purity could not preſerve itſelf amidſt ſo much luxury. Such froth gives birth to* Venus.

You ask from whence proceed theſe monſtrous crimes;
Once poor, and therefore chaſte, in former times
Our matrons were: No luxury found room
In low rooft houſes, and bare walls of lome; —
But wanton now, and lolling at our eaſe,
We ſuffer all th' inveterate ills of peace,
And waſteful riot, whoſe deſtructive charms
Revenge the vanquiſh'd world, of our victorious arms.—
Since poverty, our guardian-god, is gone;
Pride, lazineſs, and all luxurious arts
Pour like a deluge in from foreign parts. —
Our former ſimple manners are betray'd;
Nor cares the drunken dame what's done or ſaid.

Dryden's Juvenal. Sat. 6.

This

This is a ſtrong reaſon to oblige thoſe to temperance who have any deſign to live chaſte.

But granting there may be ſome who have no other deſign in all their care than to preſerve their beauty; ſurely, nothing is more abſolutely neceſſary for this purpoſe than temperance: This is what ſupports while pleaſure deſtroys it. Beautiful faces are preſerved by temperance as the fineſt flowers in a cool air; theſe fade away before the fire, as the other decay by pleaſure.

The voluptuous, ſaith *Seneca*, *contradict the prince of phyſicians, who thought that women could never be bald or gouty: Now*, ſays he, *they have the ſame diſeaſes with men, becauſe they are guilty of the ſame exceſs; they have loſt the privilege of their ſex in having loſt all moderation and temperance. The phyſicians in our days ought to be more skilful than they were formerly; as pleaſure is daily introducing new diſeaſes, they muſt neceſſarily find out new remedies.*

What can the moſt vicious ſay to this reaſoning of the philoſopher? He ſhews them that what they hold moſt dear and precious is not to be preſerv'd but by the means of temperance. This virtue is not leſs neceſſary to beauty than to chaſtity; it is of great ſervice to the countenance as well as to the conſcience. If after this, they are not perſuaded thereto, we may look upon them as incapable of being ſo; for how can we attack pleaſure more powerfully than by the principles of morality,

of

of phyſic, and even delicacy itſelf? Morality recommends temperance for the preſervation of chaſtity; phyſic for the preſervation of health; and even the delicacy of their ſex for the preſervation of beauty. Here then they muſt ſubmit; where the deſign of being wiſe, beautiful, or healthful, will produce that alſo of being virtuous.

At leaſt let one vice be the remedy of another, and let the ambition of being thought agreeable make them renounce all luxury and exceſs. As the covetous abſtain from many diverſions to ſave their money, ſo ſhould women to ſave their conſtitution and ſtate of health. If we cannot perſuade them to virtue, let us at leaſt ſow ſedition among their vices, and raiſe a civil war among thoſe enemies whom we cannot conquer by force.

I am not ſpeaking to them concerning the care of their ſoul, but only concerning that of their outward beauty: It would be wrong to talk to them here in the ſtile of St. *Jerom* to *Salvinia*, when he counſels her *to abſtain from the pleaſures of the world, if ſhe had any hopes of thoſe in heaven; that it is better to endanger the body than the ſoul, that a woman ought rather to weaken her conſtitution than hurt her chaſtity, and that it is better to have a pain in the ſtomach than a ſick conſcience.* I require not of them a temperance ſo rigorous as to reach the moſt ſevere mortification: I am not

ſpeaking

ſpeaking againſt pleaſure as pleaſure, which is ſometimes neceſſary; and of which chriſtianity is ſo far from depriving us, that it even conſecrates it in one of the moſt ſolemn rites belonging to religion.

I am not for deſtroying but only purifying it; nor do I think there is any neceſſity for being always melancholy in order to be virtuous. I ſhall only make uſe of moral reaſons, whatever other might be drawn from chriſtianity; eſpecially when I am ſpeaking to thoſe women who propoſe eternal ſatisfactions in renouncing ſuch as are momentary; who addict themſelves to temperance not only for reaſon but religion's ſake; and who think it their duty to ſhun pleaſure, not only to preſerve their health, their beauty, or their reputation, like the heathens, but who intend thereby a more glorious and perfect end.

Great as it is, I mean not to make uſe of this advantage; I know it would have been enough to have recommended the ſingle example of *Heracli* the wife of *Conſtantine* *; who ordered the image of *Venus* to be buried, and the croſs ſet over it, to ſhew that chriſtian women ought not to triumph but on the ruins of pleaſure; to ſhew I ſay, that, as before the devotion of this great princeſs, the image of that lewd goddeſs of the *Gentiles* was exalted above

* This is related of *Helen* the mother of *Conſtantine*, in *Ruffin.* lib. 1. and *Socrates*, lib. 1. cap. 13.

the

the croſs, which was found interred at her feet, pleaſure deſtroys all that is moſt holy and religious in the world.

As the poets feign that *Adonis* died in a bed of lettice, chriſtians might well ſay that he could never have lived under the ſhadow of the ſacred tree on mount *Calvary*. This thought alone would ſuffice to throw a wholſom bitter into the moſt delightful ſweets of pleaſure; but this is what I intend not to make uſe of here: I ſhall attack Pleaſure but with the weakeſt arms, that I may conquer with the greater glory; to ſhew that ſhe hath no other ſtrength than what the weakneſs of our imagination gives her; and that were we without error, ſhe would likewiſe be without power.

We will lay aſide therefore the thoughts and arguments wherewith religion furniſheth us, and make uſe only of ſuch as are preſented by mere natural religion; we will leave ſacred philoſophy, and conſult only the profane. We will ſhut the bible, and open *Seneca*; *Seneca*, I ſay, who, tho' enliſted in the party of *Epicurus*, yet eſpouſed not that of pleaſure; but, on the contrary, he always oppos'd it both in his writings and way of living. Let women only conſider what this philoſopher wrote to his mother *Elbia*; to learn what ſort of temperance is neceſſary for them in the opinion of even an heathen.

It is from him they may learn, that pleaſure obſtructs the uſe of reaſon; that inquietude precedes, and repentance follows it; that it is all deceit, promiſing always more than it gives; that the voluptuous are ſlaves to their pleaſures, as the covetous are to their pelf; that had pleaſure any ſolid good in it, it would be but of ſhort duration; and that it is of the nature of time, who can call nothing his own but a ſingle inſtant. In the ſchool of this great maſter of ethics, they will learn to ſeparate the ſoul from the body without ſuffering death, but only by renouncing the moſt groſs pleaſures which prevent the action of the mind, and are inceſſantly ſending up thick vapours into the higheſt region of the ſoul to obſcure the light therein. It is the inferior part that ſupplies the paſſions with matter, as the earth does the clouds; and this is what philoſophy endeavours to diſſipate, in order to render the mind more clear and calm, in proportion as it is eſtranged from terreſtrial pleaſures. And indeed, what is there in the world which diſturbs us ſo much as pleaſure? Is it not inſatiable, and never contented with its enjoyments; but is always increaſing, like the fire that is continually fed with fuel? It is this ſhameful and incurable dropſy of the ſoul, which make us always thirſty after the empoiſon'd ſweetneſs of pleaſures. Nature is ſatisfied with moderate pleaſures for its ſupport and entertainment; but opinion,

opinion, which herein impoſes upon the will, is never content.

When a woman hath once given a looſe to her appetites, ſhe is no longer miſtreſs of them; let her treat herſelf with all the diverſions ſhe can, they only ſerve to increaſe her deſire. How extravagant is pleaſure! *Cleopatra* will ſerve us for an example of the voluptuous as well as of coquettes. She was deſirous to excel *Marc Antony* in the elegance and ſumptuouſneſs of her entertainments; ſhe therefore cauſed a pearl, worth 200000 crowns to be diſſolved in vinegar, and then drank it off, and was preparing to do the ſame by another, which ſhe wore in her ear, had not *Lucius Plancus*, who was the umpire in this ſhameful conteſt, cried out aloud, that *ſhe had conquer'd*. How ſtrange a fancy, and what inſolence muſt it be, that could give a reliſh to ſuch a draught!

What pleaſure did *Meſſalina* take in the marrying her galants when her husband was alive? She meaſured the greatneſs of her contentment by that of her infamy. She never thought that her pleaſure was perfect but when it was completely wicked. *Tacitus* ſpeaking of her ſays, that it will appear rather a fable than an hiſtory, and almoſt incredible that *in the city of* Rome, *the wife of an emperor, ſhould dare to marry another* *, *in the moſt ſolemn and public*

* *Caius Silius*, a young married man of the prime nobility, whom ſhe conſtrained to divorce his wife *Silana*. Tacit. Annal. 11.

manner

manner, her husband being ſtill living, and not diſtant above ſix leagues from Rome. Into ſuch extravagancies will imagination hurry us, when we ſuffer ourſelves to be tranſported with the deſire of pleaſure.

We find among the *Grecian* women * a courteſan, who being tired with kings affected the acquaintance of philoſophers; who attacked wiſdom after having triumph'd over power; and who gloried more in the devoirs of *Socrates* than in thoſe of *Cyrus* or *Artaxerxes*. Among the *Romans* we find two empreſſes jealous of and enraged againſt each other, on the account of a ſcandalous affection they both ſhew'd for a buffoon of the ſtage. How blind is pleaſure! It ſometimes delights itſelf more with dirt than with pearls. It is not truth, but opinion that guides and ſatisfies it. How full is it of whims and caprice! All the artiſans work but in vain to find new ſubjects for its employ. It ſoon reaches the bounds of neceſſity; but to reach thoſe of fancy, is impoſſible.

Herein then our appetites are juſtly puniſh'd, when, eaſy as it is to ſatisfy them while under the conduct of reaſon and nature, it is impoſſible ſo to do, when they are tranſported with vanity. Pleaſure without reaſon is a blind perſon without a guide; it regards not either the importance of the laws which it deſpiſeth, or the value of the objects which it embraces, or

* *Phryne.*

the

the infamy that generally attends its perſuits. On the contrary, reſtraint but irritates the more; the voluptuous take not leſs pleaſure in tranſgreſſing a command then in vanquiſhing an enemy; and all the circumſtances which make a law more ſacred and inviolable, ſeem but to inhance the pleaſure of violation. The firſt of women imagin'd that the forbidden fruit had a much finer taſte than any of all the trees in paradiſe.

Pleaſure alſo ſeems more ſweet the dearer it is bought, but it is mere fancy and not truth that makes it precious. When vanity hath join'd it, we regard not its object only in that wherein it is delightful, but wherein it is forbidden. Here it is that pleaſure opens the eyes, ſhe who at other times keeps them ſhut, and who cannot ſee but in the dark; here it is that ignorance itſelf is ingenious.

When the object of our deſires is not eaſily obtain'd, what will not the moſt cowardly undertake, or the moſt ſtupid invent? The vanity that is mix'd with pleaſure ſupplies it with hands and eyes; it gives light to the blind and courage to the fearful. What devices, what fineſſes to reach a deſign! of what inventions are they capable whom we took for the moſt ſimple when animated with the deſire of pleaſure! Of what ſins are they guilty, even they whom we eſteem'd moſt holy, when they become infected with this paſſion! do they not

ſtifle

ſtifle the motions of reaſon, and even of piety itſelf, to follow thoſe of an irregular appetite?

But more clearly to ſee the bad intentions of thoſe who renounce temperance, we need only look upon the picture which the holy ſcripture hath drawn of a voluptuary*. She is painted all over *with the name of* blaſphemy, on the account of her wicked attempts, her lyes, and profanations; ſhe is called a *monſter of the ſea*, from her inſatiable deſires, her inconſtancy, and ſtormy paſſions. *She is array'd pompouſly, and deck'd with gold and pearls*, on account of her vanities, luxury and extravagance; *ſhe hath a golden cup in her hand*, which ſhe preſents to all the world, and eſpecially to the great ones of the earth, to ſhew her greedy proſtitutions, and conſummate impudence. Laſtly, *She is drunk with the blood of the ſaints*, on account of her hatred to all thoſe who oppoſe her either by inſtruction or example. Theſe then are the principal ſtrokes to be obſerv'd in this picture; but as if it was not yet complete, the ſcripture ſaith, There was written in great letters in her forehead the word *Myſtery*; the myſtery of wickedneſs, impudence, and infamy. You ſee then where pleaſure carries us when it is accompanied with opinion and vanity; you ſee, how it blinds us, unleſs we in good time look out for a remedy in the everlaſting rules of morality.

* Rev. xvii.

If

If we ſay not that this virtue is neceſſary to all the world, it ſurely is more particularly requiſite for women; ſince it is not eaſy for them to obſerve the laws of chaſtity when they violate thoſe of temperance. Beſides, ſome accuſe them of having a ſtronger inclination to pleaſure, and of being more eager in their purſuit of it than we are: They ſay, that *Thisbe* came to the place of aſſignation before *Pyramus*, and even before the appointed time *; and that it was *Eve* who preſented the forbidden fruit to *Adam*.

But I look upon all this as ſcandal, and cannot think the conſtitution of women any more corrupt than our own; yet we cannot but ſay, they have more need of temperance than men, on account of the regard they ought to have for chaſtity. They have more need of it, not only for their virtue but for their reputation; becauſe it is not eaſily believed, that a woman, who delights in nothing elſe but pleaſure, can be always chaſte; it is very difficult for intemperance and chaſtity to agree together.

Chaſtity is auſtere, and lewdneſs ſoft and delicate. *Pliny* ſays, that it was an opinion of ſome of the ancients, that the ſun was fed by vapours from the ſea, and the moon by thoſe that ariſe from fountains and rivers. The wiſe

* Ovid. Met. lib. iv. ver. 55.

live on bitterneſs like the ſun; but the diſſolute live on ſweet water like the moon, and partake alſo of her inconſtancy, defects, and eclipſes. Not to flatter the ſex, I ſtill ſay, they are under a ſtronger obligation than men to beware of pleaſure; becauſe, beſides the ſweetneſs of their natural diſpoſition, which is therefore more capable of being corrupted, they lie under another misfortune; they ſeldom have any aſſiſtance from ſcience, or much buſineſs to employ them, and therefore have I adviſed them to ſtudy and labour to prevent the uſual dangers from idleneſs and ignorance. I oppoſed the idle before the voluptuous, that I might deſtroy the effect in the cauſe, and attack intemperance even in its ſource.

Chriſtianity no doubt can ſupply us with arguments ſtill more ſtrong and uſeful; but I think the foregoing ſufficient. It is enough to induce women to fly intemperance, if they would conſider, that it is not only an enemy to all the virtues, but moreover the ruin of health, of beauty, of reputation, and of reaſon; that there are pleaſures more pure, and even greater, which they may innocently enjoy; that all neceſſary ſatisfactions are eaſily obtain'd, and that they are only imaginary, which are ſo chargeable and troubleſom; it is enough for them often to reflect in what contempt and horror the heathens themſelves held the voluptuous. *Appius* derided

derided the perſuits of *Meſſalina*, and *Eubates* thoſe of *Laïs*; it is enough to conſider, that they who lead diſſolute lives generally die in ſhame and torment: *Jeſabel* was thrown headlong from a window; *Julia* was ſtarv'd to death; *Poppea* was kill'd by a blow on her belly when with child, and *Cleopatra* by the bite of an aſp.

CHAP. XII.

The SUPERSTITIOUS.

WE deal with our devotion in much the ſame manner as amorous painters with their drawings; they can ſcarce ever paint a female face without giving it a touch or ſome reſemblance of her they love: So, in the ſervice of God, we adapt it to our conſtitution. We follow his laws, as the heavens do the *primum mobile*, and obey his will; but not without regarding in ſome meaſure our own. We are always ſeen painted, as *Phidias* in the midſt of our pieces.

Some women, whoſe natural coldneſs eſtranges them from the perſuit of pleaſures, imagine themſelves perfect enough in profeſſing continency. Others, whoſe natural tendency inclines them to compaſſion, think that the

whole perfection of a chriſtian conſiſts in ſhedding tears at the ſight of a miſerable object. The melancholy, who love darkneſs and ſolitude, think that every thing muſt be abandon'd for the ſake of meditation, and that none can be ſaved without being contemplative.

Thus upon examination we ſhall find, that many women practiſe no other virtues than ſuch as ſuit their humour; they follow their own diſpoſition rather than the law; it is not any command they obey but their own inclination. They are guilty of a new ſort of idolatry in offering ſacrifice to themſelves; and if it be not the work of their own hands which they adore, it is at leaſt that of their imagination, ſome idol of the brain.

It is true then that the very ſource of ſuperſtition is ſelf-love, which ſo ſtrongly abuſeth us, that inſtead of worſhipping God we often adore nothing but our own opinion. Herein the ſuperſtitious are not leſs to be pitied than blamed; that, in making themſelves a new God, they make not one that is eaſier to be ſerved; as, I ſay, they form to themſelves a God always in wrath, who never beholds them but with terror in his countenance, and expects no other worſhip from them than what is prompted by fear; who treats them not as a father treats his children, but as a tyrant treats his ſlaves.

How

How contrary is ſuperſtition to the tranquillity of the ſoul, as well as to the love of God! How unneceſſarily do the ſuperſtitious afflict themſelves! The moſt guilty can ſometimes find ſafety by embracing the altar, or throwing themſelves at the feet of an idol: But ſuperſtition hath no aſylum; on whatever ſide ſhe turns ſhe can find no reſt: If ſhe would aſcend to heaven, there ſhe ſees her tremendous judge; if ſhe deſcends to the abyſs below, there ſhe meets with her executioners; if ſhe retires into her own conſcience, there ſhe perceives the dread that perſecutes her.

I am not ſpeaking of moderate but exceſſive fear; ſuperſtition is not troubled by halves; but as it is ſaid that the *Pythoneſs*, or prieſteſs of *Apollo*, never gave an anſwer to thoſe who conſulted the oracle, before ſhe had obſerv'd an univerſal trembling in every part of the ſacrifice, we may ſay the ſame of the ſuperſtitious, they tremble all over: But they are not leſs blind than wretched and culpable God deſires burnt-ſacrifices, and they offer him ſuch as are frozen.

I know that he requires fear as well as love; and that theſe are as the two poles of all the motions and reſolutions of our mind; but on theſe terms, that as one of the poles is under our feet while the other is above our heads, ſo we ought to degrade fear and exalt charity; tho' they be for ever inſeparable, we muſt not put them

in the ſame rank, for this would be to confound all order.

Fear and love ſhould be together in the ſame ſoul as *Jacob* and *Eſau* in the ſame womb *; but theſe muſt be produced in the ſame order as were thoſe twins; if fear be the elder, love muſt follow it. I hope this compariſon will give no offence, ſince in every reſpect it is ſo juſt; as fear is wild like *Eſau*, love is pleaſant and ingenuous like *Jacob*: And indeed theſe two paſſions are often as two ſiſters contending in the ſame ſoul, like thoſe two brothers ſtruggling within *Rebecca*; and laſtly as love imitates the younger, and acting upon the advice of reaſon, as *Jacob* followed the counſel of his mother, gets the ſuperiority of fear.

It is true, women are ſubject to both theſe paſſions, and have ſometimes been accuſed of being exceſſive in both; but however, if we examine well their inclination, we ſhall often find it like that of *Rachel*'s, who ſhew'd a greater affliction for her younger ſon than the elder. They love *Jacob* better than *Eſau*; they are more induced to love than fear; they are more governable by gentle ſweetneſs than by harſh menaces.

This is alſo what God requires of us in the ſervice we pay him; he would have leſs fear than love; we may fear, but we can never love him too much. He hath ſet bounds to his juſtice, but none to his goodneſs. He puniſhes much

* Gen. xxv. 24.

leſs,

leſs, and rewards our actions much more than they deſerve; in chaſtiſing us he hath reſpect to what we are; but in bleſſing us he hath regard to what he is himſelf; his vengeance ariſeth from our wickedneſs, and his favours come from his own infinite goodneſs.

Beſides, love may be agreeable when ſeparated from fear, but fear can never be ſo when ſeparated from love. The devils fear God, and the angels love him. There is love without fear in heaven, as there is fear without love in hell. From this ſource comes ſuperſtition, which for ever trembles, and is incapable of that reſt and aſſurance which charity enjoys. The ſuperſtitious act quite contrary to *Rebecca*; they ſtifle every ſentiment of love, and labour not but to increaſe their fear; they love *Eſau* better than *Jacob*.

And this ſeems the cauſe of the great diſorder in this age; this the common cauſe of the ſuperſtitious curioſity of many women. As they have no love for God, they have no manner of reliance upon him. They diſtruſt a providence, or look upon it as an enemy, whoſe every action they ſtudy, and would fain know all its ſecret ways. They are curious after futurity, and will ſpare no pains or coſt to know what is to come. As they are always under alarm, there is no oracle which they will not conſult.

All their reflexions are full of myſtery; having paſs'd the night in bad dreams, they ſpend the day in interpreting them. They cannot

ſpeak three words without introducing preſages, obſervations, omens, viſions, and apparitions. All days are not alike proper for their undertakings, nor every way for their journeys. They are very obſervant of what they meet; a hare or a weaſel will make them turn back again. The croaking of a raven is enough to ſet them upon making their will.

Juvenal complains that the women of his time had brought this ſuperſtition into faſhion. *They dare not*, ſays he, *take a voyage, or even a walk, without the advice of an aſtrologer; and that the circus of* Rome *was full of ſuch women as came to conſult the ſoothſayers and augurs, on the progreſs of their amours, or the happineſs of their marriage. That the deſtiny of common men went cheaper than that of princes*; and laſtly, *that it was eaſy to deceive the whole world, as there were lies of all prices, and diviners of all ſorts* *. If an heathen ridiculed the women of

* — The middle ſort who have not much to ſpare,
To chiromancers cheaper art repair,
Who clap the pretty palm to make the lines more fair.
But the rich matron, who has more to give,
Her anſwers from the *Brachman* will receive:
Skill'd in the globe and ſphere, he gravely ſtands,
And with his compaſs meaſures ſeas and lands.
The pooreſt of the ſex have ſtill an itch
To know their fortunes equal to the rich.
The dairy-maid enquires if ſhe ſhall take
The truſty taylor, and the cook forſake. —
And all alike unknowing future fate,
Believe what fond aſtrologers relate.

Dryden's Juvenal. Sat. vi.

his

his days, who gave themſelves up to this error; what ſhall we ſay to thoſe of our time, who are ſo exceſſively curious and credulous? What ſhall we ſay againſt the ſuperſtitious in an age of truth, if they were ſo ſevere againſt them in an age of lying?

They are every where ſpoke againſt, and an eminent writer, making a jeſt of this blindneſs of many women, ſays, *that all ſorts of birds ſhould not engage their curioſity, but only thoſe which formerly had been men or women.* So that to truſt in the choice of a crow, which is eſteemed an ill omen, they muſt think that it was once a young damſel, who for prattling a little unſeaſonably was puniſh'd by *Minerva*, and changed into this bird*. To think that upon ſeeing a ſwan, at the firſt ſetting ſail, there is reaſon to expect a happy voyage, they muſt know that he was formerly a king in *Liguria*, who ſo greatly lamented the fall of *Phaeton*, that the gods in pity turn'd him into a ſwan †.

To think that magpies menace detraction, they muſt believe that they were formerly the daughters of king *Pierus*, who having ſpoken injuriouſly of the muſes were turned into theſe chattering birds ‡. Thus almoſt the whole art of augury is founded on the metamorphoſes. Diviners ſtudy the poets, and the fables of

* Ovid Met. lib. ii. ver. 510.
† Ovid Met. lib. ii. ver. 368.
‡ Ovid. Met. lib. v. ver. 662.

theſe ſerve for a foundation to the predictions of the other. Where there is no fable there is no prognoſtic; one lye takes its ſource from another; ſo that none but low and vulgar minds have ever been taken in by theſe ſooth-ſayers; the wiſe have always laugh'd at and deſpiſed theſe impoſtors.

But why, ſome will ſay, have we not known ſome dreams prove true, like that of *Calphurnia*, when ſhe pray'd her husband *Cæſar*, not to go to the capitol*, becauſe ſhe had dream'd he was there aſſaſſinated? Did not the ſooth-ſayers foretel the empire of *Auguſtus*, and the death of *Domitian*? I might anſwer, that if at any time they ſpake truth, it was merely by chance; or that theſe diviners know not what will happen to themſelves; and that even *Pompey*, who was renowned for his skill in this ſcience, could not foreſee what befel him through his own fault†.

And as the ſtrongeſt example that can be given on this ſubject; *Thraſeas* ‡ foreſaw not his own deſtiny, when he went to inform *Buſiris* king of *Ægypt*, after a drought of nine years continuance, that he might have water enough

* Plutarch. Suetonius *in the life of* Cæſar.
† Plutarch *in the life of* Pompey.
‡ Aliter, Thraſius.

Cùm Thraſius Buſirin adit, monſtratque piari
Hoſpitis effuſo ſanguine poſſe Jovem:
Illi Buſiris: ſies Jovis hoſtia primus,
Inquit, et Ægypto Tu dabis hoſpes aquam.
Ovid. de Arte Aman. lib. i.

if

if he would ſacrifice ſtrangers to *Jupiter*. *I will make an experiment then*, ſaid the tyrant, *of thine art on thyſelf*; and accordingly ſacrificed him: Thus they pretend to foretel the fortune of others, while they know nothing of their own.

However ſuppoſing that they ſpeak truth, it is commonly ſo obſcure, that their predictions ſerve rather to make one fear events than ſhun them. *Joanna* counteſs of *Flanders*, blind with this common error of her ſex, went to conſult ſome diviners concerning her ſon *Ferrand*'s ſucceſs when he made war againſt *Philip Auguſtus* king of *France*; the oracle made anſwer, *that the king ſhould be troden under foot, and* Ferrand *ſhould be received with great pomp in* Paris. Tranſported with joy at hearing this, ſhe waited impatiently for the war to begin; ſhe hurried on affairs, being eager to enjoy the promis'd victory. But ſhe experienc'd to her coſt that truth is not to be ſought from the ſource of a lye: *Ferrand*, notwithſtanding the ſeeming favour of the oracle, was overthrown in this battle. Indeed the king fell from his horſe, but without receiving any hurt; and *Ferrand* enter'd *Paris* in great pomp, but it was after he had loſt the victory, being carried thither by his enemies.

Thus it is that they, or the devil for them, always give doubtful anſwers, and create much trouble. But ſuppoſing there was no obſcurity in their anſwer, and that they could plainly foretel

foretel what would happen, ſuch curioſity can never give any ſatisfaction, whether we are pleaſed with their predictions or not: For if they tell us of any thing fortunate, we are ſo ſolicitous for the event, that hope itſelf becomes a pain to us; ſo that when the time is come, we have neither ſtrength nor taſte to reliſh it. If the prediction be unfortunate we anticipate the evil before it comes; fear makes the torment of a day laſt many years; as hope leſſens the good, fear inhanceth the evil of whatever we expect to enjoy or ſuffer.

It is true then that predictions ſerve only to trouble us whether they threaten evil or promiſe good. What woman was ever better puniſh'd for her curioſity in this reſpect than *Agrippina*, when ſhe went to learn the fortune of her ſon *Nero*; and was told, that *he ſhould be emperor indeed, but her murderer?* Never was woman ſo tortur'd both with hope and fear at the ſame time. Thus, I ſay, their curioſity always brings on inquietude. But whatever they ſuffer hereby, they are more worthy our laughter than our pity. I am not at all ſurpriſed that God ſhould permit them to be wretched and abuſed. Of all women that are deceived, none have leſs reaſon to complain than thoſe who conſult theſe vain oracles; when they addreſs themſelves to profeſſed cheats, and would learn truth from the enemy of all mankind.

As

As we could not pity any one that ſhould take a fancy to play with a ſerpent, for being ſtung; how can we pity thoſe who have recourſe to the devil, for being deceived by him? Their error is but the juſt puniſhment of their curioſity.

God not only forbids any belief in diviners, but even the liſtening to them *; and if he permits them to diſcover any truth, it is only to puniſh our folly. And indeed they ſometimes foretel what ſhall happen; but it is no matter, we ought not to believe even the truth on account of the perſon that relates it; we muſt refuſe acceptance, as we would pearls from a robber, who had been rifling ſome altar or pillaging a temple. It is ſacrilegious, tho' he ſpeaks truth; it is with a deſign to abuſe it at our expence; and there is not leſs danger in believing it, than in following the falſe light of vapours that would lead us to a precipice. Every thing that comes from ſuch horrid acts is to be ſuſpected as the preſent of an enemy. If the advice of that *Trojan* † was juſt, when he counſel'd them not to receive the *Coloſſus* dedicated to *Minerva*, into the city, on the account of thoſe who preſented it; how can perſons beſieg'd, as we continually are, receive without ſuſpicion any preſent from thoſe who would fain conquer us? How can we accept of

* Deut. xviii. 10, 14. Jer. xxvii. 9. xxix. 8. Mic. iii. 7.
† Laocoon. Virg. Æn. ii. 42.

nutriment

nutriment from the hand of thoſe that hate us, without fear of being poiſon'd? If the *Trojans* ought to have diſtruſted the *Greeks*, how is it that we put any confidence in devils?

We do not believe them, ſome will ſay; we only conſult theſe diviners out of curioſity. Yes, God permits us to believe them; when we go to conſult them againſt his will, we muſt not be ſurpriſed at our giving credit to them againſt our own reſolutions. Why ſhould he preſerve us in a danger, wherein we have plunged ourſelves againſt his expreſs command; or grant us victory, when we have taken up arms againſt him and ſide with his enemies? When we liſten to them, there always remains ſome impreſſion on our minds which we cannot deface. We inſenſibly gather fear from their menaces, and hope from their promiſes. Our reaſon is not ſo ſtrong, that, when it did not prevent us from conſulting them, it ſhould hinder us from believing them. God denies it any particular ſtrength for this purpoſe, and will not work miracles to preſerve the raſh and ſelf-conceited.

There is ſcarce any ſin that offends him more than this, as it is attacking his love, his power, and his wiſdom: His wiſdom, becauſe we are not ſatisfied with his government of the world, and would fain pry into his ſecret ways; his power, becauſe we think hereby to avoid what he hath determin'd; and his love, becauſe

cauſe if we had more confidence in his affection, we ſhould be leſs curious to know what may happen to us, in proportion to our more firm belief in his will.

Still this ſuperſtitious curioſity ſeems much more tolerable in the heathens: The art of divining and predicting future events made part of their religion. But what reaſon is there that this error ſhould continue after the oracles have ceaſed? Superſtition is much more blameable in this age than in that of infidelity: Eſpecially ſince our Lord hath deſtroy'd their temples and overthrown their idols, why ſhould we repair their altars, and take part with his enemies after he hath driven them away? Why ſhould we recal them when he hath put them to flight?

And yet to ſee the ſuperſtition of many, we could not but ſay that idolatry is ſtill among us, and that the oracles have not ceaſed; for what matters it whether we conſult them in a temple or in a cloſet? It is not leſs true idolatry, becauſe it is leſs public; while it dwells in the heart, it is ſtill in the world. On the contrary, as the devotion of the primitive chriſtians was much ſtronger than that at preſent, even at the time when they hid themſelves in caves; ſo ſuperſtition is more powerful than ever, tho' it be not licens'd. It muſt needs have a great deal of power, when perſons are addicted thereto in ſpite of any reſtraint from the law.

Beſides,

Beſides, it is a greater crime to be ſuperſtitious at preſent than in the time of the *Gentiles*, becauſe the heathen women thought they were conſulting the gods; and we know that whatever power our fortune-tellers have, if they have any at all, they muſt have it from devils. The heathens were attacked by enemies in diſguiſe; but we ſee them openly, and act through wickedneſs what they did through ignorance.

Let not any one ſay, that many women in conſulting theſe diviners do not think that they are addreſſing devils, but that their curioſity is very innocent. I can ſcarce imagine any one ſo dull and ſimple as to think it no ſin: They have at leaſt ſome doubt of it; but they are very eaſy in not knowing more of this matter, for fear of ſeeing more clearly a fault which they have no inclination to amend. And ſuppoſe they knew nothing of it, if their intention is not blameable, their ignorance is; they are oblig'd to learn an article of ſuch importance; they ought to know that it is the greateſt of all crimes, which violates the firſt commandment, and which ſhakes the very foundation of chriſtianity; becauſe to *worſhip God alone* is to put our whole truſt and confidence in him. However, it would be better to refer them to their catechiſm than to perſue this ſubject any further; I ſhall only ſay, that if many women were not very ignorant they would not be ſo

ſuperſti-

ſuperſtitious. *Cæſar* was never more aſtoniſhed than when he ſaw his wife give credit to dreams; he could not imagine that *Calphurnia*, ſo wiſe and learned, ſhould be ſuperſtitious. An ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN makes a jeſt of all theſe viſions, ſigns, figures, and preſages; ſhe takes it not ill to be informed of any error remaining in her belief; becauſe ſhe thinks it doing her no more wrong to curtail it of what is ſuperſtitious, than it is to crop the vine of its top and uſeleſs leaves. All the traſh of idle ceremonies prevents it from bearing the true fruit of piety: They neglect true chriſtianity who give themſelves up to grimace and ſhew. This is what women ſeem naturally inclined to; and for this reaſon *Strabo* ſays, *that ſome married men have been more addicted to ſuperſtition than others, having catched it inſenſibly from their wives.* But if many love to abide by their ſuperſtitious opinions, and would take it ill to be reproved; I muſt own that many likewiſe have been accuſed falſly, and that very often libertines treat the devout of theſe days, as the infidels did the chriſtians in former ages to diſcredit their piety. But what do I ſay? The truly devout are not leſs attacked by the ſuperſtitious than by libertines themſelves.

Libertines ſay that piety is ſuperſtitious, becauſe it is auſtere and grave; and the ſuperſtitious ſay that it is licentious becauſe it is free and candid: So a liberal perſon is often attacked

tacked both by the covetous and the prodigal; the prodigal call him covetous becauſe he gives leſs than they do; and the covetous call him prodigal becauſe he gives more; ſo, I ſay, a man of proper ſize is called a dwarf by a giant, and a giant by a dwarf.

Women ought not to be ſurpriſed at theſe deluders, nor renounce true piety, becauſe it hath enemies, and in all times hath been oppos'd; they muſt not yield to libertines, for fear of being too gay or free; they ought to truſt in God without arrogance, and fear him without deſpair. They muſt be neither too credulous nor too fearful. They muſt conſider with themſelves, how diſpleaſing this ſuperſtitious curioſity is to God; when thoſe who conſulted diviners and ſoothſayers were ſtoned to death by the law of *Moſes* *, and in the primitive church condemned to a penance of five years. They ought to think how ſhameful it is for a chriſtian to hold out her hand to a gipſy in order to learn her good or bad fortune; and that if we would learn future events from our hands, it ought to be on the account of good actions, and not becauſe of any lines that may be obſerved therein. This is the true chiromancy of chriſtians. It is by the obſervation of the laws, and not that of the ſtars, they muſt regulate their lives: It is the grace of God they ought to be concern'd for, and not the influ-

* Lev. xx. 6. Deut. xiii. 10.

ence

ence of a planet. What reaſon is there to live always in alarm, and to diſtruſt the providence of God, as they would the deſigns of an enemy? But I ſee the ſource of this misfortune, their fear comes from their curioſity; one ſin ſerves for the puniſhment of another. God deals with us, as the poets ſuppoſe *Jupiter* dealt with him who would have ſtoln fire from heaven. After ſuch a ſacrilegious attempt, our mind is not leſs tortured by diſtruſt than *Prometheus* was by his eagle. We muſt not wonder at the ſeverity of the puniſhment, ſince it is the chaſtiſement of one of the greateſt crimes that can be committed. How can we think to know the ſecrets of God by conſulting his enemies; or that the infernals can tell what is determin'd in heaven? How ſhameful is it for women ſo to reſemble their firſt mother as to deſire to learn of the devil the interpretation of the will of God! If we had more love for him, we ſhould have more aſſurances in his promiſes. If we relied as we ought upon his providence, we ſhould follow him as a child follows his father without aſking whither he is going. Thus then to be leſs diſturb'd we need only to be leſs curious: Let us have more hope and we ſhall have leſs anxiety concerning what is to come. We may ſay here as was ſaid to *Abraham*, *Caſt out the bondwoman and her ſon* *; baniſh fear and its effects, as the pa-

* Gen. xxi. 10.

triarch

triarch baniſh'd *Hagar* and *Iſhmaël*, keeping only charity as the legitimate that is capable of giving us perfection and happineſs.

But further, we muſt look upon ſuperſtition in another light to diſcover all its uglineſs; it comes not only from fear, but from cunning and deſign. It is not only ſcrupulous but diſſembling. Let us compare the ſpeeches of a ſuperſtitious perſon and her actions, her viſage and her conſcience: Let us follow her out of church, where ſhe had been making a thouſand grimaces, to ſee how ſhe will behave in her family; ſhe is not the leſs out of humour after all her extaſies; ſhe ſeems to have been in the preſence of devils and not of angels. Strange it is, that ſhe ſhould carry in her ſuch a ſpirit of diviſion, when ſhe is juſt come from the houſe of peace, or that ſhe ſhould be ſo chagrin'd at her return from paradiſe. Had ſhe been truly devout, ſhe would be more patient, ſweet, and tractable; but it was nothing but appearance, nothing but diſſimulation and hypocriſy. The ſuperſtitious woman cries out more loudly againſt thoſe who bow not at the name of Jeſus than againſt thoſe who blaſpheme; ſhe cares not how many ſhe makes poor, while ſhe maintains two or three that are ſo; ſhe has a ſoul full of vengeance, while ſhe complains that *charity is cold*; ſhe does not mind to waſh away her ſins, provided ſhe

can

can hide them; ſhe ſpeaks a ſaint, and lives a ſinner.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the PATIENCE *of* WOMEN.

WE muſt not ſuffer ourſelves to be overcome with grief any more than with pleaſure; moderation is required for the one, and patience for the other. If ſome women give themſelves up to ſorrow inſtead of reſiſting it, it is not by way of mortification but through deſpair. They indulge it not out of virtue but ſtubbornneſs. It is a ſtrange diſorder to ſee how an exceſs of joy is forbidden while an exceſs of ſorrow is allow'd. There ſeems leſs ſhame in deſpair than in voluptuouſneſs; the leaſt irregular motions of joy muſt be reſtrain'd, while the extravagancies of ſorrow are permitted. All the world cries out againſt a woman drowned in her pleaſures, but none againſt thoſe that are drowned in their tears*.

* — Eſt quædam flere voluptas.
Ovid. de Triſt. lib. iv.
Dulcibus indulget lacrymis, aperitque dolorem.
Val. Flacc. lib. iii.

Grief

Grief dreſſes itſelf up no leſs than joy. It is full of inconſiſtencies and caprice: *Æſop* had reaſon to ſay, that when *Jupiter* was diſtributing honours to the gods, Grief preſented herſelf, to whom was given for her ſhare parade and equipage, that ſhe might the better expoſe her complaints and afflictions. As the poet ſaith, *There is ſometimes a pleaſure in weeping*, we may likewiſe ſay, there is often much vanity. Fancy joins itſelf with ſorrow; it is ſhe that cauſeth ſuch ſtorms on this ſea; it is ſhe that ſwells the eyes with tears, and heaves the boſom with ſobs and ſighs.

I know not in all antiquity a more proper example for women than what *Seneca* makes uſe of when he would comfort *Marcia* after the death of her ſon. He ſets before her two *Roman* ladies quite oppoſite to each other, that ſhe might chooſe one for imitation. Theſe two ladies were the ſiſter and the wife of *Auguſtus*; they had each of them ſuffer'd a very great loſs, *Octavia* in the death of her ſon *Marcellus*, and *Livia* in the death of *Druſus*; but with this difference that *Octavia* would not be comforted, but rejected every thing that could be propoſed to her for the remedying her grief; while *Livia* evidenced more ſtrength of mind, in liſtning to thoſe who ſpoke of the glory of her ſon, and attending to the intreaties of her friends; and yet her loſs

was

was not leſs than *Octavia*'s, foraſmuch as *Druſus* had thoſe perfections which were only expected in *Marcellus*. Is it not better to reſemble *Livia* than *Octavia*? Is it not more profitable and more commendable to ſuffer ourſelves to be pacified, than to be ſtubborn in affliction?

And indeed ought we not to do all we can, to drive away an enemy who ſeeks nothing leſs than to deſtroy us? Of what uſe is grief, either to thoſe that mourn or that are the cauſe of it? It is not enough to permit it to go away of itſelf, it muſt be driven away without our waiting its departure. But why is it detain'd? As if it were a weakneſs to yield to the perſuaſions of thoſe who would fain comfort us; when it would go away it finds great difficulty in taking leave; we fondly embrace it, we are jealous of it, and are afraid it ſhould eſcape.

I am not ſurpris'd to ſee the pains we take to detain pleaſure, becauſe it is a fair enemy that attacks us not but with agreeable arms, and whoſe wounds are not leſs delightful than mortal; but I cannot find what ſort of chains they are that bind us to grief. I cannot ſee any charms or allurements in it; nor can I conceive why we are ſo fond of it, and are never ſatisfied with its bitterneſs. I cannot ſee what it is that ſeduceth us except it be fancy and cuſtom; there

there ſeems to be no other ſource of ſuch a flood of tears, nor other cauſe of ſuch deep lamentations.

I cannot read without aſtoniſhment the hiſtory of *Jane* queen of *Caſtile* and daughter of *Ferdinand* and *Iſabella*; this miſerable princeſs having loſt her husband, conceiv'd ſuch a diſtaſte of every thing that ſhe was quite inconſolable. She would not ſtir out but in the night, nor at any time enjoy the light of the ſun; but lived altogether by the light of flambeaux or the ſtars; not deſirous to ſee any thing whatever but what had a melancholy caſt to entertain her grief. How ſtrangely tragical is grief! when ſhe enter'd into the church, and had placed herſelf near the body of *Philip*, ſhe would not ſuffer any other woman to approach: And that nothing might be wanting to her ſorrow, ſhe mourn'd not only this ſo great a loſs, but added jealouſy thereto, as if ſhe had not yet loſt him.

The great cardinal *Ximènes* did all that was in his power to prevail on her to change her manner of living, and to conſider what unneceſſary trouble ſhe created to herſelf and the whole court: But ſhe continued ſtubborn in her diſmal deſign, and indulg'd a grief, which we might well call the moſt extravagant and troubleſom that ever was. This lady then is the true portrait of thoſe who ſuffer themſelves to be carried away with ſorrow inſtead of ſtriving

ing againſt it; who love ſorrow, and do all they can to maintain it; who are deſirous to have the object of their grief always before their eyes, that the ſpring of their tears may not be dried up; and will not take the dagger out of the wound leſt it ſhould cloſe: They glory in being invincible to reaſon but not to grief; it ſeems a weakneſs to yield to any perſuaſions or prayers.

I own that grief may be juſt, and the ſubject of our affliction ſometimes ſo noble that the very ſigns of it are glorious: But whatever is the cauſe, there can be no reaſon to love it, unleſs it be when it produceth a juſt repentance, or is the effect of chriſtian penitence; unleſs, I ſay, it ſerves to correct or puniſh us; and not when it only diſquiets us, and is prejudicial. I ſhould not blame women if they indulg'd their grief but as *Mary Magdalene* did hers; this is too fair a ſpring of tears to wiſh it dry. But it is to be fear'd, that the grief of many is contrary to that of this ſaint, and that they give not themſelves ſo much trouble by way of repentance like her. It is to be feared that their patience would be criminal, and their courage no leſs culpable than their faint-heartedneſs. They ſometimes employ it very improperly, and are only patient while they are infected with ſome ſtrong paſſion.

They do as *Hippia* * did, who commonly complained of being ſick while at home; but was well enough, and ſtrong to follow her galant into a ſtrange country. "It was her cuſtom "before, ſays *Juvenal*, to lie delicately on a "ſoft couch, and yet ſhe complain'd not of lying "hard upon deck, like the common ſeamen; "ſhe who had been uſed to nothing but the "ſweeteſt odours in the place of her birth, can "now ſnuff up the ſmell of pitch as if it were "ambergreeſe. Her bad deſign ſtrengthens "the delicacy of her nature; and ſhe who before

* Thus *Hippia* loath'd her old patrician lord,
And left him for a brother of the ſword:
To wandring *Pharos* with her love ſhe fled,
To ſhew one monſter more than *Afric* bred:
Forgetting houſe and huſband, left behind,
Ev'n children too; ſhe ſails before the wind;
Falſe to them all, but conſtant to her kind.
Born of rich parentage, and nicely bred,
She lodg'd on down, and in a damaſk bed;
Yet daring now the dangers of the deep,
On a hard mattreſs is content to ſleep.
Ere this, 'tis true, ſhe did her fame expoſe;
But that, great ladies with great eaſe can loſe.
The tender nymph cou'd the rude ocean bear,
So much her love was ſtronger than her fear.
But had ſome honeſt cauſe her paſſage preſs'd,
The ſmalleſt hardſhips had diſturb'd her breaſt.
Were ſhe to follow her own lord to ſea,
What doubts and ſcruples would ſhe raiſe to ſtay?
Her ſtomach ſick, and her head giddy grows;
The tar and pitch are nauſeous to her noſe.

But

" before was afraid of the leaſt danger, re-
" gards not the boiſterous waves, and thinks
" it no trouble to handle the ropes, or work
" at the oar."

" Had this voyage, adds the poet, been
" made in the company of her husband inſtead
" of a galant; alas! how would ſhe have been
" afflicted with the head-ach, and all manner of
" painful diſorders; how uneaſy would have
" been the hammock, and how terrible the
" face of the ſea! A ſtorm would have
" frighten'd her almoſt to death. But as the
" voyage was undertaken unjuſtly, nothing
" can be more agreeable; ſhe makes no com-
" plaint at all of her ſufferings, ſince it is upon
" an infamous account. Her paſſion gives her
" patience."

But in love's voyage nothing can offend;
Women are never ſea-ſick with a friend.
Amidſt the crew ſhe walks upon the boord,
She eats, ſhe drinks, ſhe handles every cord;
And if ſhe ſpew, 'tis thinking of her lord.
Now aſk, for whom her friends and fame ſhe loſt?
What youth, what beauty cou'd the adulterer boaſt?
The galant, of his days had ſeen the beſt:
Deep ſcars were ſeen indented on his breaſt;
And all his batter'd limbs requir'd their needful reſt.
A promontory wen, with grieſly grace,
Stood high upon the handle of his face:
His blear eyes ran in gutters to his chin:
His beard was ſtubble, and his cheeks were thin.
But 'twas his fencing that her fancy mov'd;
'Twas arms and blood and cruelty ſhe lov'd. ——

Dryden's Juvenal, Sat. vi.

However let us ſee what makes her ſo reſolute and courageous; ſhe leaves a ſenator to follow a gladiator; from the wife of a nobleman ſhe becomes the miſtreſs of a ſtage-player; ſhe prefers a *Sergiolus* to a *Fabricius*. The pleaſantneſs of the country ſhe forſook; the cries of her children whom ſhe abandon'd, the love of her husband whom ſhe betray'd, could not reſtrain her; ſhe broke all her bonds, to follow a man who deſerv'd nothing but contempt. He was crooked, blear-eyed, and of a mean aſpect; but it was enough to pleaſe her, that he was a prize-fighter, nay he was a ſoldier too, which name alone was enough to make her love him; and tho' he was as ugly as a ſatyr, ſhe thought him as handſom as the poet's *Hyacinthus*, who was belov'd and bewail'd by *Apollo* *. This then is what rendered *Hippia* ſo brave and reſolute. Never was there a more ſhameful patience than hers; if yet we may give the name of a virtue to ſuch a brutal reſolution. — It is to be feared that ſome are like her, who cannot endure any trouble or affliction, but when it is on the account of ſome vitious undertaking. It is to be feared they would tremble like her were they to ſuffer any thing for religion or reaſon; but would ſhew too much hardineſs and patience to carry on an unjuſt deſign or a ſcandalous intrigue.

* Ovid. Met. lib. x. ver. 162.

If

If a heathen writer employ'd a whole ſatire againſt thoſe who ſhew themſelves extremely tender and delicate when they are to ſuffer any thing for virtue, but are ſtrong and hardy in vice; what ſhall we chriſtians ſay of thoſe who are guilty of this crime? Deſerve they not a more rigorous puniſhment? or ſhall patience and reſolution be held in a higher degree in the days of error than in the days of truth?

I know no ſtronger argument to confound us than this, nothing more powerful to oblige us to the practice of every moral virtue, than to ſet forth that of the heathens, and to ſhew how far we fall ſhort of them therein, notwithſtanding the great privileges and advantages we enjoy. The better to judge of this, let us conſider how far the patience of the heathens extended. *Virtue*, ſaith *Seneca*, *grows ruſty, as it were, if it be not perſecuted. Affliction is the furnace that purifies it; it is the wind that by ſhaking it makes it ſtrike a deeper root. We could never judge what we are if we never taſted affliction; it is this alone that gives us a true knowledge of ourſelves.*

Thus ſpeaks this philoſopher; but he goes further, and treats of this virtue in a manner that is quite aſtoniſhing. *God*, ſaith he, *exerciſeth good men with ſufferings to increaſe their ſtrength; the pains that he inflicts are the marks of his love; he treats us not with the tenderneſs of a mother, who ſtrokes and careſſes her children; but*

with the generous ſeverity of a father, who makes trial of them by hardſhips and exerciſe. Nor is it only a ſign of his affection, but of his good opinion of us; when he proportions the evil to our ſtrength, and ſends not adverſity but to thoſe whoſe conſtancy he knows can bear it. He exerciſeth us, as a fencing-maſter does his ſcholars; he takes the foile in hand againſt thoſe that have the moſt ſtrength and dexterity. Thus he tried* Mutius *with fire,* Fabricius *with poverty* †; Rutilius *with baniſhment* ‡; *and* Socrates *with poiſon.*

He riſes ſtill higher, and ſaith, *that was* Jupiter *to look down upon the earth he could not behold a more glorious ſight than a good man retaining his integrity under a weight of woes, and combating with courage his bad fortune. This is a ſight indeed worthy of God* ‖. What excellent words are theſe! How far do they ſeem above the thoughts of an heathen! Would we not think that he borrow'd them from the holy ſcriptures, where it is often ſaid that God *afflicteth his children* **; and that the Lord, in

* *M. Scævola,* who having deſign'd to kill *Porſenna* king of *Hetruria,* and miſtook one of his lords for him, burnt his right hand in the king's preſence.

† A nobleman of *Rome,* but ſo poor that his daughters portions were paid out of the public treaſury: Yet was he proof againſt all manner of bribes and corruption.

‡ He was baniſh'd by *Sylla*; and would not return when recall'd.

‖ See *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ, lib. iii. cap. 3.

** Prov. iii. 11, 12. Job v. 17. 1 Theſſ. iii. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 11. iv. 5. Heb. xii. 6. Rev. iii. 19.

giving

giving them thorns and bitterneſs, makes them partakers of his crown and cup *; that he is faithful, and holdeth the balance in his hand, nor will load us with more affliction *than we are able to bear* †; that in ſuffering we become a *ſpectacle to God, to angels, and to men* ‡. If *Seneca* ſaith that he tempted the philoſophers, we ſay that he tempted the patriarchs. He permits the devil to attack us, and our neighbour to give us offence, that he may behold our victory, when by patience we ſoften our neighbour and triumph over our principal enemy.

And yet upon examining the reaſoning of *Seneca*, we ſhall find that all the patience of an heathen philoſopher is very imperfect in compariſon of that of the moſt ignorant chriſtian. We have much ſtronger aids; the light of grace hath quite another power from that of reaſon, to induce us to patience. This ſpiritual unction ſweetens all our labours and heals our wounds. We have far other rewards and other promiſes. Our thoughts of immortality are much clearer than thoſe of the heathens, whoſe philoſophers ſaw not, like our martyrs, the heavens open'd ‖, and a crown in the hand of God to encourage and reward his ſervants.

* Matth. xx. 23.
† 1 Cor. i. 9. x. 13. 1 Theſſ. v. 24. 2 Theſſ. iii. 3.
‡ 1 Cor. iv. 9.
‖ Acts vii. 56.

But did I ſay to encourage them? Yet more, he himſelf is their companion and fellow-ſufferer. Such then is the advantage of chriſtianity, when in the exerciſe of patience we have not only God for a ſpectator, but for an example, a comforter, a companion, and reward. Of what great importance is this point to chriſtians! The God of the heathens regards them not but from heaven; but ours deſcends with us into dungeons, in tortures, and in the ſhades below. When *Marc Antony* was beſieged by *Cæſar*, and in great deſpair, *Plutarch* tells us *, "that at the dead of night was "heard the ſound of all manner of inſtruments, "and a horrible noiſe like to that which is "made at the feaſts of *Bacchus*; which was in- "terpreted by thoſe who pretended to under- "ſtand prodigies, to ſignify, that *Bacchus* the "god whom *Antony* had particularly worſhip- "ped, and whom he ſtudied to imitate, had "now forſaken him." The God of chriſtians forſakes them not in ſuch manner; he leaves us not in afflictions, but only in riotous pleaſures; he abandons not the wretched but the guilty. *Bacchus* left *Antony* in this extremity, as we have ſaid elſewhere, *Venus* left the ſiege of *Troy* when ſhe was wounded. Such is the aſſiſtance the heathens receiv'd from their gods and goddeſſes. This *Roman*'s god accompanied him not but at feaſts, and the goddeſs of the *Greeks*

* In his life of *Antony*.

warred

warred no longer for them than they were ſuperior to the *Trojans*.

But further, theſe falſe gods were no fitter to inſtruct than to ſuccour them. What examples do they give for patience? As learned and virtuous as they paint their *Pallas*, they ſtill make her impatient and outrageous; they give her a ſhuttle in her hand to ſtrike *Arachne* with, and to drive her by the affront to hang herſelf *. *Diana* with her own hands ſlew the children of *Niobè* †; and *Latona* changed the peaſants into frogs ‡: How then ſhould the heathen women be patient, when the goddeſſes whom they ſerv'd were not ſo? After ſuch examples, could they make any ſcruple of being vitious? Was not their licentiouſneſs authoriſed by the ſinful pattern of their gods?

It is true then that the heathens had not the like motives for practiſing this virtue as we have; and if any extraordinary example of it has been found among them, this only renders us the more culpable. It would be ſtrange if the vanity of the heathens ſhould be more patient than the charity of chriſtians: It would be monſtrous to ſee that grace with reaſon could not do more than mere reaſon alone; and nothing ſure can make us bluſh more for our faults than to ſee the perfection of infidels. Their

* Ovid. Met. lib. v. ver. 133.
† Ovid. lib. vi. ver. 288.
‡ Ovid. lib. vi. ver. 370.

patience could not ariſe but from four cauſes; from conſtitution, vanity, neceſſity, or reaſon: That from conſtitution is diſgraceful; that which comes from vanity is mercenary; that which comes from neceſſity is too much conſtrain'd to be of any value; and that which comes from reaſon alone is commendable indeed, but not perfect enough without the aid of grace.

This is that divine aſſiſtance which was wanting to the virtue of the heathens, and which God hath vouchſafed to us to accompliſh ours. This is that holy buckler which renders our better part invulnerable. Without grace patience is melancholy: Reaſon alone cannot fortify it entirely. Let us only look on the countenances of thoſe who have been moſt renowned for courage; behold *Lucretia* with a dagger in her hand, and *Portia* * with coals of fire in her mouth, how deſperate they look! On the contrary, chriſtian patience hath a ſmiling countenance in the midſt of the ſevereſt afflictions, by reaſon of the inward conſolation that animates it. It hath a certain ſweetneſs which throws out its rays even when under torture. Let us conſider the beautiful picture which *Tertullian* hath drawn of her in the form of a woman, whom hope incites to lift up her eyes to heaven, without any appearance of preſump-

* The daughter of *Cato*, the widow of *Bibulus*, married to *Brutus*. See *Plutarch* in the life of *Brutus*.

tion;

tion; and whom humility obliges again to caſt them down without the leaſt ſign of deſpair †.

Perſeverance and chearfulneſs are two infallible ſigns of true patience, which remains unſhaken, without hardening itſelf too much or being exceſſively tender. I no more approve of *Arethuſa* *, who was changed into a fountain, than of *Niobè* who was turn'd into marble. Theſe are ſhameful metamorphoſes, and unworthy the conſtancy of a chriſtian: We muſt own then, that without grace the ſtrongeſt minds are apt to relax and be terrified; but with it the more mean and ſimple do miracles with regard to this virtue. And eſpecially, as to perſeverance, I ſhall recite an example, which is almoſt incredible, and in the deſcription whereof, St. *Hierom* ſeems, in the opinion of many, to have ſtrained the point too far.

"A woman, ſays he, of great wiſdom was "accuſed of adultery in the city of *Verſailes*. "The young man, who was charged with be- "ing her paramour, confeſs'd himſelf guilty. "He acknowledg'd a ſin which he had not "committed, and thinking to avoid the puniſh- "ment due to one crime, he made himſelf "guilty of three, cowardiſe, lying, and mur- "der. The lady on the other hand was very "reſolute, ſhe confeſs'd nothing, but her

† De patientiâ, §. 15.
* Ovid. Met. lib. v. ver. 564.

ſilence

" ſilence was not owing to any apprehenſion
" of death, but to the fear of a lye: She was
" not afraid of death but of infamy; it was
" not to preſerve her life, but what was dearer
" to her, her reputation; ſhe dreaded not pain
" ſo much as the character of an adultereſs;
" ſhe undergoes the torture both of fire and
" water; the executioner himſelf is dreadfully
" amaz'd; he has leſs cruelty than ſhe con-
" ſtancy; ſhe is handled in ſuch a manner,
" that there is ſcarce any place in her body for
" a freſh wound; he knew not where to
" ſtrike but on a ſore place.

" To add terror after pain, the young man
" is ſlain before her face, but all in vain; this
" dreadful ſpectacle moves her not; ſhe is ſtill
" as courageous as ſhe was chaſte; and as ſhe
" ſcorn'd to yield to the charms of pleaſure,
" ſhe will not ſtoop to the menaces of torment.
" Yet more, the rage of her enemies ſtill con-
" tinues as well as her reſolution and patience;
" ſhe is condemn'd, and the executioner ſtruck
" her four times without effecting his purpoſe;
" at the firſt blow he only raiſed the skin, and
" drew no more blood than from a ſlight
" ſcratch.

" The executioner quite confounded at the
" ſtrangeneſs of this affair knows not what to
" do; he prepares for a ſecond ſtroke with all
" his art and ſtrength, but it ſucceeds no
" better than the former; it ſeems as if he had

" ſtruck

" ſtruck an image of braſs with a leaden ſword.
" He is quite enraged, and gives her a third
" blow to as little purpoſe: Tranſported with
" fury he then endeavoured to plunge the
" ſword into her boſom; but it bent to the
" very hilts, nor could he hurt her either with
" the point or edge. Great was the aſtoniſh-
" ment of the ſpectators; the executioner
" withdraws, and another takes his place with
" a promiſe to do better.

" He ſtruck her three times; the firſt blow
" made her tremble, the ſecond wounded her,
" and the third laid her upon the ground. It
" was thought ſhe was dead, but ſhe was only
" in a ſwoon; for as they were preparing her
" for burial, her friends obſerv'd ſome ſigns
" of life in her, and applied proper remedies
" to ſave her, which they at length did with
" all imaginable ſecrecy to prevent her invete-
" rate enemies from retaking her".

The epiſtle of St. *Hierom* on this ſubject is very eloquent; the conſtancy of this woman animates his ſtile, and he gives her no other name than of the *woman who was ſmote ſeven times with the ſword of the executioner without being wounded unto death.* Every ſtroke was enough to take away her life, and we may ſay that if God work'd a great miracle in preſerving her life, he yet did more in preſerving her courage. Her body was not ſo much put to

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the trial as her patience; and I am more amazed at ſeeing her unſhaken than unſlain.

True perſeverance is a chriſtian virtue; the heathens ſometimes ſlew themſelves for fear of ſuffering. Their death was not ſo much a ſign of their courage as of their fear and impatience: As ſome ſuffer much for fear of dying, others die for fear of ſuffering. If the deſire of life makes us endure many evils, the dread of ſuffering makes us wiſh an end of life. Death and pain ſeem a remedy for each other.

True patience ought to perſevere as long as the evils which are the objects of it laſt: But alas! of how ſhort duration is that of many women! they at firſt complain, and immediately deſpond: They know not that God hath a particular hour wherein it pleaſeth him to help us. When the heathens themſelves could ſay, that *God took delight in ſeeing good men bear up under ſufferings*, we ought not to wonder that he ſhould wait ſome time, and not ſend us aid as ſoon as we pour out our complaints. As the ſtars appear brighteſt in winter-nights, the grace of God diſplays itſelf moſt in the greateſt extremity; this is his hour, for was he to come to our aſſiſtance as ſoon as called, we ſhould never ſuffer at all; becauſe our impatience begins the ſame moment with our ſufferings.

I would to God that all who ſink under their misfortunes as ſoon as they are attack'd, would

ſet

ſet before them for their encouragement the example of the conſtant and chaſte *Suſanna*, when ſhe was perſecuted by the two elders. How ſteady was her patience! over how many enemies did ſhe triumph! ſhe withſtood perſuaſion, intreaties, preſents, threatnings; nay, ſhe equally deſpiſed life and death; the hopes of living or fear of dying could not move her. She is troubled, ſhe is accuſed and condemn'd; ſhe is carried to the place of puniſhment, and the executioner hath lift up his arm to ſmite off her head. Alas! how great her extremity! how long did heaven withhold its aid! might it not be ſaid that ſhe was forſaken? And yet this was the hour that God choſe to make her patience the more glorious, the more it had been tried.

He ſuffers likewiſe one of the greateſt patriarchs, and whom he loved, to come to the very point of ſacrificing his only ſon *; after he had promiſed him, that the poſterity of this ſon ſhould be as the ſtars in heaven for multitude, and particularly bleſſed in their race. He is not ſatisfied with *Abraham*'s leaving his houſe in obedience to his command; he does not bid him return, nor ſhew him any other victim when the altar was prepared; he ſtays till the child was laid upon the wood, and the knife lift up in his father's hand to ſlay him. This was the hour of extremity.

* Gen. xxii.

And

And laſtly, this is the hour which he ſo delights in, that the *Virgin* herſelf having pray'd our Lord to work a miracle at the marriage in *Cana* of *Galilee*, in favour of thoſe who had ſo handſomly treated him, he ſaid, *His hour was not yet come.* And as if the virgin had been too haſty in her requeſt, and that her holy impatience had made her pray for ſomething at an improper time, inſtead of calling her mother, he accoſted her with the common appelletion of woman *. Many women indeed are too haſty in this reſpect, and wait not the pleaſure of God in their ſuffering, nay they ſometimes complain before it happens.

Now, this their impatience ariſeth from three ſources equally bad, too much delicacy, incredulity, or ignorance; from too much delicacy, when not being uſed to ſuffer, the very firſt afflictions that attack them quite overcome them; from incredulity, becauſe, if they rightly believed that God takes a pleaſure in ſeeing them ſuffer patiently, and that it is he himſelf who tempts them by way of probation, and would not that they ſhould ſink under their misfortunes, without doubt they would endeavour to ſatisfy him and acquire greater glory to themſelves; from ignorance, becauſe, not knowing wherein adverſity may be profitable for them,

* John ii. 4. This appellation however, with the Author's leave, might not be any ſign of diſreſpect. John xix. 26. See biſhop *Pearce* againſt *Woolſton*.

they

they are terrified at the firſt onſet, and conſider not that the bitterneſs of afflictions may ſometimes have as ſalutary an uſe as that of medicines.

Provided we have a little conſtancy, affliction purifies as well as tries us. *Plutarch* * tells us, that formerly in *Caryſtia*, there was a quarry of ſoft ſtones which they uſed to ſpin and draw into thread, like flax or cotton, and to make napkins and kerchiefs thereof, which to whiten or clean when ſoiled, they flung into the fire. Affliction and pain have the ſame good quality, in thoſe who have patience, when it mollifies the ſtubborn and purifies the lewd. Strange as it may ſeem to make cloth of ſtone, it is no leſs ſurpriſing to ſee the moſt ambitious and hardened heart render'd ſupple and obedient, after ſome malady or ſevere affliction. Indeed we know not the merit of patience, when we conſtantly fly the opportunity of ſhewing it: And as we may juſtly ſay of the ſoldier, who receives the call to battle with regret, that he is a coward; ſo we may ſay, the chriſtian who is quite caſt down at the thoughts of ſuffering, hath by no means true patience.

This virtue then is exerciſed in the greateſt accidents, but it ought not however to be neglected in the ſmalleſt. It acts not always upon the ſtage or in the ſight of the world. There are ſubjects wherein it diſplays itſelf without

* In his diſſertation on *oracles*.

ſpectators,

ſpectators, but not without glory. It ſhines no leſs ſometimes in the abuſes of our friends than in the injuries of our enemies. And ſo much may be cauſed by another's imperfections, as to place us in the rank of martyrs, tho' no blood be ſhed under the hand of an executioner.

And yet there is ſcarce any virtue ſo rare as this. There are women who find it more difficult to bear with thoſe who have merit, than with thoſe who have none; they are at more pains to help being envious than diſdainful. When we praiſe any one, however juſtly, they think it is robbing them of their due. This then is the ſource of the firſt diſorder; we cannot endure the defects of others, becauſe we are ignorant of our own; ſo that to know our own imperfections, and to bear with thoſe of others, ſeems but an effect of the ſame cauſe. To ſuffer the injuries of another, we need only courage; but to ſuffer his defects, we muſt thoroughly know ourſelves.

Were we to add a chriſtian to a moral reaſon, we ſhould find yet a more noble ſource of patience. It comes from charity among chriſtians, as from decency among the philoſophers; and granting that it is not the knowledge of our imperfections, which makes us patient with regard to thoſe of others; yet we ought not the leſs to bear with the defects of our neighbours. If we have many blemiſhes ourſelves,

ourſelves, we ought to endure thoſe of others, on account of the reſemblance; if we have none, we ought to bear with them ſo much the more, becauſe God hath been pleaſed to exempt us from them; we ought always, I ſay, to bear with them, either from juſtice or knowledge.

We ought charitably to bear with all the world, as much as lies in our power. The angels adapt themſelves to us; tho' they have wings, which they uſe in heaven, they walk with men on earth as if they had none; ſo the moſt perfect women ought to employ this holy complaiſance. Tho' they may ſometimes raiſe themſelves up with the contemplative, they muſt not be aſhamed of lowering themſelves to the pitch of the more dull and ſimple. Laſtly, whatever ſort of patience they want, they need not look for examples but in their own ſex. Are their husbands wanting in fidelity towards them, let them regulate their conduct by that of *Octavia* to *Marc Antony*; are they quite worthleſs, let them imitate the modeſty of *Abigail* to *Nabal*; are they ill-natured, let them follow *Monica* the mother of St. *Auſtin*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

The SCANDALOUS *and* OFFENSIVE.

SOME great writers have taught, that baſhfulneſs is not a virtue, but only a commendable quality; that it is not voluntary, but only a ſudden emotion in the interior part, which often in ſpite of us ſhews itſelf upon the viſage. They ſay that it is contrary to perfection; and that he, who is perfect from an habit of virtue, is no more capable of dreading infamy than of doing ſuch actions as deſerve it.

On this account they add, that there are three ſorts of perſons exempt from baſhfulneſs, the old, the virtuous, and the wicked; the wicked, becauſe they feel no ſting within, when the habit of evil hath taken from them all manner of tenderneſs and remorſe; the virtuous and the old, becauſe they know aſſuredly that there is nothing in their actions that deſerves either ſhame or infamy; and they look upon diſgrace as an evil eaſily to be avoided by perſons who do nothing to deſerve it. Theſe then ſeem the foundations of their opinion, which I think it not very difficult to overthrow.

It is eaſy to ſhew that baſhfulneſs is not only a commendable quality but a moral virtue. As

As an habit of boldneſs is attainable, why not an habit of modeſty? We may uſe ourſelves to fear as well as to be bold. If by degrees a ſenſe of ſhame is loſt through perſuaſions and aſſurances, why may it not be acquired by continual alarms? Were baſhfulneſs not a virtue of itſelf, it may become ſo by means of prudence, which may make a voluntary habit of a ſudden emotion.

Thus it is ſaid that anger may change into zeal, and that which of itſelf is only a paſſion, may become a moral, nay even a chriſtian virtue. And why may we not ſay of baſhfulneſs what is ſaid of courage, which of itſelf is only a paſſion, but may likewiſe become a virtue by the conduct of prudence? Tho' it be a ſudden motion from goodneſs, cannot I afterwards give my conſent thereto? Thus baſhfulneſs may be called a virtue, when it is voluntary and become habitual, and when it is placed in a proper mean, by the prudence that regulates it. Accordingly *Ariſtotle* makes it a moral virtue, placing it between two extremes as the other virtues.

And as to the old and virtuous not being ſubject thereto, becauſe they are not guilty of any thing worthy of infamy, and which they look upon as what may eaſily be avoided, I think we may alledge the contrary. We ought not only to fear the diſgrace which may happen to us by our own fault, but even that which happens by misfortune. The fear of loſ-

ing

ing reputation is inſeparable from wiſdom. Fear is neceſſary to ſalvation *: The edifice of chriſtianity is quite contrary to all other; it ſtands or ſubſiſts not but upon a foundation that ſhakes continually: A too great aſſurance comes from too good an opinion of ourſelves.

But laying aſide here chriſtian arguments, I ſhall only make uſe of moral and natural. Look we therefore into *Seneca* to ſee, whether old and good men are not ſubject to baſhfulneſs. "It ſhines ſtrongeſt indeed, ſays he †, "in young men, but the wiſe and aged are "not free from it, tho' they have diſcarded all "vice and paſſion. There are thoſe who ſweat "and tremble when they ſpeak in public; and "yet a good orator is not leſs aſſured of his "diſcourſe than an old man of his actions. "And as to the vitious, *Sylla* was never more "violent than when he redden'd; becauſe after "that, he ſeems to have diſcharg'd all ſhame, "and all his fear was extinguiſh'd with the "colour of his face. It happens alſo to the "virtuous, as was ſeen in *Pompey*, who bluſh'd "every moment; and *Fabianus* ſhew'd an "extraordinary baſhfulneſs in full ſenate, only "at being called upon to give his evidence, "tho' he was not at all intereſted in the caſe. "It was not the want of reſolution, but the

* Timor fundamentum ſalutis eſt; præſumptio impedimentum timoris. Tertul. de Cultu Fœm. lib. ii.

† Epiſt. 11.

"novelty

" novelty of the affair that made him bluſh. " It is not in the power of wiſdom to prevent " it, any more than 'tis to raiſe it." This reaſoning more particularly concerns thoſe women who ſeem too baſhful, and have too much reaſon to think that it is not a virtue; their baſhfulneſs being founded on the natural repugnancy they have to evil, and upon the deſire they have to preſerve their reputation. They bluſh not only at being condemn'd, but at being accuſed or even ſuſpected.

You ought not, ſays St. *Hierom* writing to a lady, to *content yourſelf with the teſtimony of your own conſcience, but to ſeek that of the world.* But why? they will ſay; what neceſſity is there to pleaſe men? What avails their judgment when our only care ought to be to pleaſe God, who oftentimes approves our thoughts when men condemn the outward carriage and appearance? *Tertullian* * forbids them to talk in this manner, and adviſes them to follow the doctrine of the apoſtle, who directs us to *pleaſe our neighbour for his good to edification*, that he may praiſe God, and approve of our converſation, *having no manner of evil thing to ſay of us.* And how ſhall any one preſerve her reputation, if ſhe is under no fear of loſing it? Undoubtedly, if the fear of pain is neceſſary for keeping it off, the fear of diſgrace is no leſs neceſſary for the avoiding any reflections of this kind.

* De Cultu Fœm. lib. ii. Rom. xv. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 21. Tit. ii. 8.

As,

As, many are more afraid of being guilty than of being puniſhed; ſo, many are more afraid of infamy than of being vitious. They are more apprehenſive of puniſhment than of the crime: Baſhfulneſs therefore is of great uſe to them, ſeeing that the dread of being blamed prevents them from being guilty. This is but too common a diſorder. As we generally love praiſe better than virtue, ſo we are more afraid of reproach than of deſerving it. And many likewiſe own that baſhfulneſs has not ſo much reſpect to ſin, as to the diſgrace which is the puniſhment of it.

It not only hinders women from doing ill, but from inciting others thereto. And here I intend to oppoſe all ſuch as take pleaſure in giving offence to others, and yet boaſt themſelves innocent. If they offend not chaſtity, they offend againſt charity: And if ſometimes they provoke love without accepting it, they have no more reaſon to boaſt, than one who hath committed murder, in not being wounded. We cannot make our neighbour fall without being partakers of his guilt.

The fear of giving offence hath been ſo great in ſome women, that to prevent it they have plucked out their eyes. But no ſuch ſeverity is required in our age: Let them not deſtroy any natural gifts, but lay aſide art and affectation. They have no occaſion to pull out their eyes, but only to regulate their glances.

Yet

Yet after all they are chaſte, they ſay: And what chaſtity can there be in the ſoul of a perſon who would fain raviſh that of others? If they loved this virtue, they would give it no diſturbance. The arrows however of love often recoil upon thoſe who let them fly; the aſpects as well as the rays of the ſun grow hot by reflexion. This would only be a light without heat, but the objects ſometimes kindle it in ſending it back upon itſelf: They at length feel themſelves what they deſigned for others; and it ſometimes happens, that they who endeavour to inſpire perſons of merit with love, have fell in love themſelves with the moſt worthleſs. But why, they will ſay, is ſimple vanity ſo great an evil? The fair can no more help pleaſing than the ſun his giving light. It is true this may be done very innocently where the deſign is juſt; but where it is not ſo, it is exceſſively criminal.

I have often wonder'd, why of all the women whoſe converſion is ſpoken of in ſcripture the name of *a ſinner* is particularly given to *Mary Magdalene* *; ſeeing alſo that, in the opinion of many of the fathers, her greateſt crime was the ſtudy of inciting love, and making herſelf agreeable to ſeveral galants at the ſame time. They think that in fact ſhe was not guilty of any thing more than appear-

* Luke vii. 37.

ing beautiful; but that this was enough to deſerve the title of a *ſinner*, becauſe ſhe made others ſin, and herein gave great offence; ſo that one of them ſaid, ſhe was not only a *ſinner*, but *the ſin of the whole city*. And yet to ſee her weeping night and day in a grotto, and paſſing many years in auſterity and faſtings; to ſee in what manner ſhe threw aſide her jewels and neglected her beauty, can any one think ſhe was guilty of nothing elſe but a deſire to pleaſe? If this fault required ſo great penitence, what will they ſay who reſemble her? Theſe are the innocents of our age; theſe a great part of the moſt faſhionable; ſuch the exerciſe of many women, and ſuch their ſport and paſtime.

What greater evil can they be guilty of than cauſing a paſſion, which often occaſions folly, rage, and murder? May they not as well uſe poiſon? It is of little importance what weapons they employ who commit murder; what matters it whether they kill with a ſword or a ſingle glance of the eye. Look upon *Marc Antony* in his follies; examine well the vile and mean actions he committed when he became amorous of *Cleopatra*, ſo far as cowardly to fly when there were hopes of victory, and even to ſlay himſelf. May we not juſtly ſay, that he had no greater enemy in the world

than

than *Cleopatra*, and that the giving himſelf up to the love of her, was the principal cauſe of his ruin? Look we on other amoriſts, and conſider their complaints, their watchings, their anxiety, their chagrin, their tranſports, and their deſpair; and do we not ſee, that they who inſpire them with ſucceſsleſs love are the cauſe of the greateſt evils that can happen to them? "Ye dreſs up yourſelves, ſays "*Tertullian*, ſpeaking to the offenſive, by "way of temptation; I ask not where is "the chaſtity of a woman, but where is at "leaſt the charity of a chriſtian; ye weep to "ſee any one bleeding, and the leaſt wound "of the body incites your compaſſion, and "have you none for thoſe of the ſoul? But "eſpecially for thoſe yourſelves have given? "Scarce ever was murder more blameable "than yours in infecting the ſoul of another "with vitious love. If ye were chaſte, ye "would have modeſty; if you were cha-"ritable, ye would at leaſt have pity: But "ye are not leſs impudent than cruel.

"Ye ſay, that you have no deſign of do-"ing evil; but this is not enough; ye ought "alſo to prevent it. If ye really had as "great an averſion for vice as ye ought to "have, ye would be more afraid of mak-"ing others commit it. Why ſhould not "offences of this kind be puniſhable, as well

" as murders committed without de-
" ſign?" — But without doubt they deſign to offend, when they intend to inſpire love; the one is connected with the other; and if they did not think it an evil, they would not be aſhamed to own themſelves infected with it. They intend at leaſt to create torment, if not ſin; and as little as they have ſeen of the effects of this paſſion, without doubt they intend to diſturb the tranquillity of the mind, if not to injure innocence.

And here I beg they would a little turn their minds to conſider, when they make numbers guilty, how many it was in their power to prevent from being ſo, had they been endowed with true modeſty and the fear of ſcandal; eſpecially thoſe women, to whom God hath given any advantages in body or mind, ought to conſider that they have not receiv'd good to do evil withal. In their deſire of pleaſing they would make many quit vice, if they teſtified their averſion thereto; if they ſhew'd more concern for merit, they would oblige men to acquire it, in order to gain their approbation and eſteem.

Certainly it is in the power of women greatly to advance the good morals of men, ſince it is the ſtudy of moſt of them to pleaſe the fair ſex: The ſtronger inclination women ſhew to virtue, the more would it be in practice with men.

men. In the laſt century it was obſerv'd, that no method could be found to cure a certain city in *Spain* of diſſoluteneſs but by having recourſe to the women, who no ſooner began to teſtify their affection for the public good, than the young men began inſenſibly to reform. And in the hiſtory of *France* 'tis remarked, that the modeſty of a young damſel made a complete convert of *Charles* VII.

And if women ought to be cautious of giving offence by their behaviour, they ought to be more particularly ſo with regard to their family. *Is it to be expected*, ſays *Juvenal*, *that* Larga's * *daughter ſhould be better than what ſhe is after ſeeing ſo bad an example? How ſhould ſhe be chaſte, whom her mother employ'd in writing billet-doux, and whom ſhe made her confident in the vileſt intrigues?* Thus, inſtead of preventing the effects of a bad diſpoſition, ſome mothers rather promote them by their own bad example. Nor are they guilty of this crime only towards their children, but likewiſe towards their ſervants. Nothing can be of worſe conſequence than thus to give offence to the younger ſort, who more commonly imitate a bad than a virtuous action, becauſe

* A fictitious name for a common proſtitute. Juv. Sat. xiv. ver. 25.

their minds are more inclined thereto, nor is their reaſon yet ſtrong enough to reſtrain them. As their inclination leads them to evil, example carries them on with violence till all remedies become uſeleſs. Nor is this all, beſides, that the vitiouſneſs of their conſtitution and a reſemblance of humour incline them to imitate their parents before all others, even duty ſeems to oblige them thereto; and they think that in following their actions they acquit themſelves of part at leaſt of that reſpect and amity which they owe them.

There are ſome however who, after having given ſuch ſcandalous offence in their actions to their children, think to correct them by verbal inſtructions. I ſhould as ſoon puſh them down a precipice, and then bid them take care leſt they ſhould fall: The hand thruſts them forward, and the voice pulls them back. How ridiculous is ſuch conduct! If the fear of diſobeying for a while reſtrains them in their tender years, ſcandal by degrees takes root in their minds, and viſibly ſhoots forth as age gives them more liberty. The daughter of an adultereſs may be chaſte while young; but the effects of bad example ſoon appear when ſhe is no longer under the reſtraint of age or ſhame: And indeed how ſhould it be otherwiſe? If the ſtorks carry

carry ſerpents to their young, can we wonder at their ſeeking the ſame food themſelves when they have got wings.

But to come to the greateſt and moſt common ſource of ſcandal, and that is hypocriſy. This may ſeem ſtrange perhaps, becauſe hypocriſy endeavours to hide ſin; and there can be no ſort of ſcandal given but where the ſin is public. And yet there is no doubt but that the hypocrite ſets a worſe example than the libertine; for if we meaſure the greatneſs of ſcandal by that of the crime which it is the cauſe of, in the opinion of all the world malice under diſguiſe is doubly criminal, becauſe it adds to its own ſinfulneſs that of lying. Hypocriſy ſows ſcandal, only that it may gather ſtrength in its concealment; it hides it for a while, only that when it breaks forth it may be the more detrimental.

What if that infamous lady *Magdalene de la Croix*, who deceiv'd all *Spain*, paſs'd for a ſaint a long while? Did it avail her any thing to have a good name between the age of twelve and of thirty, when her vitiouſneſs being diſcovered ſhe was found to be an hypocrite and a ſorcereſs? She triumph'd indeed in feigned goodneſs for ſome years, and had acquired ſuch reputation that the wife of *Charles* V. ſent to her the ſwaddling-clothes of

Philip II. in order that ſhe might bleſs them, and make him happy. But when her infamous practices were found out, and ſhe herſelf had confeſs'd all her vitious amours, would it not have been better with regard to her bad character never to have had a good one? Was it not more ſhameful now to paſs for a ſinner, who had ſo long been eſteem'd a ſaint?

Let not any one think that it is enough by concealing her crime to ſet a good example: This is not to prevent ſcandal, but only to defer it, and make it greater. There are no women more ſcandalous than hypocrites, ſince it is manifeſt they conceal their looſe deſigns only to give better ſucceſs to their pernicious effects; ſince, I ſay, they hide their ſins but to continue in the practice of them with leſs hindrance, and to do the greater injury to virtue by borrowing its appearance. To make this plainer I ſhall exemplify it in two *Italians*, the one an hypocrite, the other a libertine.

The courteſan *Flora* is ſcandalous, but the fair *Julia* much more ſo. The former was ſo impudent as to write over her door, *Entertainment for kings, princes, dictators, conſuls, prieſts, and others.* Yet *Julia* was worſe, who never appear'd but with great ſigns of mortification and probity, and was not only diſhoneſt

diſhoneſt but impious. As hypocrites therefore ſet a worſe example than libertines, *Julia* was more ſcandalous than *Flora*; for 'tis not modeſty that reſtrains the hypocrite, but diſſimulation: They would fain make a bad life and a good name compatible; but how abſurd is their deſign! They ſeek not reputation upon any good motive; not through charity but vain-glory; not to edify their neighbour but to deceive him.

From hence it is that when the cheat is diſcover'd, they cauſe the greater ſcandal, becauſe to the ſin which they commit they add that of diſſimulation. Their reſervedneſs is no more to be eſteem'd than the craft of thieves, becauſe all their art terminates in the deſign of ſinning longer unpuniſh'd. We may ſay the ſame of the modeſty of hypocrites as of the prudence of the wicked, the end makes them both more culpable; their ſin is the greater on account of their attempt to hide it; they are ſacrilegious in uſing ſacred means to gain a profane end.

But I have ſaid enough to ſhew that hypocrites are by no means leſs ſcandalous than libertines, becauſe their ſin is heighten'd by employing virtue herſelf to hide it. Having ſpoken of ſcandal we ſhall add ſomething relating to modeſty; foraſmuch as the love of this gives a ſtronger averſion to the other.

Modeſty, ſays Tertullian, *is a wall that hinders a perſon from wounding or being wounded by the eyes. It is ſo neceſſary to prevent any one from caſting or receiving a dangerous glance*, he adds, *that a woman who finds her neck or head uncover'd, ought to be overwhelm'd with ſhame: She ought to run to her kerchief or veil, as a ſoldier to his ſword and buckler, when his enemy comes upon him unarm'd.*

Modeſty is abſolutely neceſſary to both ſexes, but more particularly to the fair; it is the ſign and defence of chaſtity; it is ſometimes indeed a paſſion but may be made a virtue; it may be render'd voluntary by our conſent, and tho' at firſt but a ſudden emotion, it may become a moral habit. I repeat this to ſhew that we may ſtudy it, and that it is a quality which may be acquired, and that was it only natural we ſhould neither deſerve praiſe in poſſeſſing it nor diſpraiſe in loſing it. It is the opinion of all antiquity, that a woman void of ſhame is in danger of being void of honour; and that were we to paint the picture of all the virtues, we muſt borrow from modeſty their firſt and brighteſt colours.

So true is it, that it is not only a virtue, but alſo a neceſſary one for the ſupport of all the reſt. Great pains therefore ought to be taken in preſerving it, and in keeping ourſelves

ſelves from every thing that tends to lead us into inſolence and boldneſs. To this purpoſe *Seneca*'s *morals* * are of great uſe; where "he adviſeth *Lucilius* to do nothing but with "modeſty, and at the ſame time exhorts "him to have alway ſome great perſonage in "his thoughts. Chooſe you, ſays he, ſome "one that is famous, who may be, as it "were, always preſent with you in all your "deſigns, and as an obſerver of your actions. "The way to do nothing ſhameful is to do "nothing without a witneſs. You may "chooſe one according to your humour, as "well as according to your neceſſity. If "*Cato* ſeems too ſevere for this purpoſe, "take *Lelius*. Let it be ſome one whom "you can fear without an averſion, and "who may reprove you without terror."

Such is the counſel of this philoſopher, which may ſerve for women as well as men. Let them chooſe ſome one of their own ſex, whom they may ſuppoſe always preſent as a check upon them. Let them continually ſet before them the life of ſome excellent lady, either of their own or of former times; let them propoſe ſuch as are of a noble ſpirit to correct their foibles, and ſuch as are virtuous to make them aſham'd of their ſins. Let them always have theſe fair models before their

* Epiſt. ii.

eyes;

eyes; and without doubt they will dread all manner of tranſgreſſing in the ſight of ſuch illuſtrious women, as meditation and recollection can make always preſent. This advice is no leſs uſeful to ſupport the modeſty of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, than to preſerve that of a *Lucilius* or a *Seneca*.

CHAP. XV.

Of PASSIONATE WOMEN.

TEMPERANCE muſt be obſerv'd in the uſe of things, as well as prudence in the choice. As it is abſolutely forbidden to attach our affections to what does not deſerve them, ſo is it to incline them too ſtrongly even to thoſe things that are worthy of them. The phyſician who forbids us to eat poiſon, or what may be hurtful to us, cautions us likewiſe to avoid exceſs even in thoſe things that are proper for nouriſhment. The abuſe of good things is unjuſt as well as the uſe of bad. This then is the ſource of all inquietude, and of many crimes. We ſuffer ourſelves to be carried away, and engage ourſelves with too much earneſtneſs in almoſt all the affairs of life.

Women

Women ſometimes ſuffer the natural goodneſs of their temper to be impos'd upon, and are too paſſionately fond, not only of what deſerves their affection, but of the contrary. Was there ever woman more blind than *Medea* in her love for *Jaſon*? And yet he made no ſcruple to abandon her, without any regard to the ſervices ſhe had done for him. How many do we ſee forſaken like her by thoſe on whom they had conferred the greateſt favours! Does not the baſeneſs of thoſe they love ſeem a juſt puniſhment of their imprudence? Hiſtory furniſheth us with many examples to this purpoſe, but I chooſe rather to make uſe of fable, as it is particularly deſigned for inſtruction.

I ſhall only propoſe the example of *Ariadne* to all thoſe who have unhappily engaged their affections. What had ſhe not done for *Theſeus*? She had left her native country to follow him; ſhe had given him the means of vanquiſhing the *Minotaur*; ſhe had renounced for him all that was dear to her: And notwithſtanding all this he left her upon a deſert iſland, and incurred the guilt not only of ingratitude but cruelty. Thus are women paid for their fondneſs, eſpecially when it is exceſſive.

The ſame may be ſaid of friendſhip as well as of love; the ſame of every thing which they

they too much dote upon, as beauty, honours, and riches. Theſe are foreign goods which are not given, but only lent to us; they are borrow'd goods, which we muſt give up again without complaining. We are like children, who cry when you take any thing from them, that was only given them to play withal for a time. He from whom we hold all things, promis'd not, when he gave them, perpetual enjoyment. He recals them at his pleaſure, and we are obliged to him for every ſingle moment they were in our poſſeſſion.

This reflexion would draw us off, as it ought, from too great a fondneſs for pleaſures, or any good thing whatever; if we would conſider, that there is nothing firm and infallible in this world. Are we not intirely blind in our ſentiments, to think we can reſt upon a ball, or continue immoveable upon that which is fluctuating inceſſantly? Whence comes it that our affection is conſtant for objects that are not ſo? As we grieve not to leave an inn, where it was not our deſign to make our abode; why do we not the ſame by other things, wherein we cannot expect ſtability without being deceiv'd? Why do we not uſe this meditation as a ſword to cut the bonds that hold us?

Whence comes it that a woman cannot be comforted having receiv'd a loſs or ſome great misfor-

misfortune? What is the reaſon of her deſpair? It is becauſe ſhe was too blindly attached, or had too far engaged her affection. When we know that there is no certainty, either in the length of life or friendſhip, why ſhould we be ſo much troubled at the death or change of a friend? We enter upon affection as into a labyrinth, from whence we cannot extricate ourſelves but with great pain: Not to be bewilder'd in this maze, we ought to know the ways in and out as well as *Theſeus*.

What then, muſt we be without affection? And have no ſentiment at all? No; this is not what I adviſe. I permit love, and only forbid the exceſs of it; I permit affection, but cannot ſuffer it to be ſo ſtubborn when its object is variable. There is none but God whom we may love without meaſure; becauſe he is infinite, we have no need to ſet bounds to our affection. It may be irregular, but cannot be exceſſive. He is always more amiable than we can love him, and never can be otherwiſe than what he is. The rivers have a regular courſe in watering the earth, and if they overflow they ruin the countries inſtead of being uſeful to them; but they expand themſelves at large in the ſea, neither is their bed or greatneſs meaſurable. It is the ſame with our affection; it hath limits and a certain extent with regard

regard to the things of the earth, but when we love God, we cannot give it too much liberty. Great as it may be, or whatever efforts we make to love him, our love will always fall ſhort in anſwering the greatneſs of its object: Excepting this, we muſt be cautious, not only in loving as we ought, but of loving more than we ought to love.

Let not any one think that I would here defend that ſhameful indifference of courteſans, who have no affection, tho' they profeſs it to all the world. To be rightly indifferent is not to renounce all intereſt except our own. What matters it whether we get drunk with our own wine, or with that of others? Is temperance leſs violated hereby? Is it not in like manner to abuſe affection, to have none for another perſon and too much for ourſelves? The indifference of *Narciſſus* * to the nymph *Echo*, and all other beauties, was by no means commendable, when he had too much love for his own ſhadow. On the contrary, he is at the ſame time guilty of exceſs and defect; when he had too little affection for the objects that deſerved it, and too much for his own perſon.

True mediocrity has regard to the intereſt of others as well as to our own; it is not a proper indifference that ſtill retains the love

* Ovid. Met. lib. iii. ver. 357, 388.

of

of ſelf. We attach ourſelves too much to what affects us, and therefore are in deſpair upon every little loſs. We muſt wean ourſelves in good time from the goods which fortune can take away from us, leſt being conſtrain'd to quit them we reſemble the *Iſraelites*, who left their affections in *Ægypt*, and parted with regret from the land of bondage. We bind ourſelves to objects as the ivy to the walls; as we cannot diſengage it without breaking its roots or tearing off the leaves, ſo in ſeparating ourſelves from an object we always leave ſomething behind us.

To remedy this evil, we need only regard the nature of what we love; ſeparation ſurpriſeth us only becauſe it is not foreſeen: No perſon bewails the ſetting of the ſun, becauſe we foreſaw his abſence. Why was *Dido* ſo ſurpris'd at the departure of *Æneas?* But becauſe, inſtead of receiving him as a ſtranger, ſhe ſet her affections upon him without knowing whether he had any for her; it was an imperfect contract, where the articles were ſign'd but by one party. Let her example be a terror to the imprudent, and teach them, when they love, not blindly to engage themſelves too far, without knowing whether the obligation is reciprocal. But granting, however fond we are, that we pay no more affection than we receive; the exceſs

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of another does not juſtify ours, and the fall is not leſs dangerous becauſe we fall in company.

Let not any one think this reaſoning too auſtere; and that to live in this manner is to give up all to chance, and yield entirely to the uncertainty of events: I only declare that we muſt make uſe of the light of our reaſon, as we do by flambeaux in the night; but we extinguiſh them, when the light of the ſun reſtores the day. When the will of God is certainly known, we muſt conform our own thereto; we muſt ſubmit our conduct to his, and conſider that the ſuperfluous care we take prevents not the courſe of affairs. Our reſiſtance is not leſs unprofitable than impious. Our grief cannot remedy our evils; on the contrary it makes us more miſerable; and ſometimes the tempeſt is calm'd, after ſome have died with the fear alone of ſhipwreck.

I would not take away human forecaſt, but only ſubmit it to divine providence. We may be careful without being greatly troubled: Let us do all that prudence directs to ſucceed in our deſigns; let us regard all that is neceſſary for the accompliſhment of our undertaking; but when we have done all that was poſſible, if the event ſhould prove otherwiſe than we expected, we muſt bear it patiently, without ſhewing ourſelves mean and faint-hearted.

hearted. We muſt always be prepared for flight when we are attacked by a ſuperior enemy. Let us reflect upon what may happen, and when it comes it will not ſurpriſe us. It is ſhameful to weep for the death or baſeneſs of a friend, as if we imagin'd that he could never ceaſe to love or ceaſe to live.

They ſay, we are trees bottom upwards, and yet we throw not our roots towards heaven; we bind ourſelves to the earth and make all our alliances in a ſtrange country. This is a general misfortune with both ſexes, but more particularly with ſeveral women, who ſeem almoſt always exceſſive when they love and when they hate; and whoſe inclinations and averſions are ſcarce ever moderate. It is on this account that they are oblig'd to be at ſo much pains to return from their errors when at any time they are hurried away into extremes; but I know not whether women are not herein more worthy of pity than of correction; I know not, I ſay, whether men have not herein an advantage over them, who ſeldom are ſo deeply engaged or ſo paſſionately fond of what they affect; ſince in truth I perceive imperfection on both ſides. If women engage themſelves too far by reaſon of their natural tenderneſs, the affection of men is ſeldom ſtrong enough by reaſon of their natural indifference. If the diſpoſition

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of women errs in exceſs, that of men errs as much in defect. The moderation of theſe comes not ſo often from ſtrength of mind as from want of amity: But be this as it will, not to engage ourſelves either more or leſs than we ought, we muſt follow the dictates of reaſon, which ſhews us the way to regulate our paſſions, and forbids us to ſet too great an affection upon objects that are periſhable.

The conduct of grace ſtill goes farther than that of reaſon alone. God himſelf would have us not too anxiouſly concern'd with regard to our ſpiritual advancement: He would have us ſerve him without teſtifying a view to intereſt; if we have any ſpirit we ought to be more ſolicitous to pleaſe him than in ſeeking a reward. How juſt ſeems this reaſoning to confound thoſe who are paſſionate with regard to the things of this world! What ſhall we ſay of thoſe women who are more anxious for temporal advancement than even they ought to be for ſpiritual? I mean, that having done all we can in the ſervice of God, we ought to wait for ſuch iſſue as ſhall pleaſe him, and ſuch complacency as he would have us enjoy in following him. We muſt intirely rely upon his good-will, who exalts or humbles us as he judgeth moſt neceſſary.

And if *Martha* gave herſelf too much trouble in ſerving *our Lord* himſelf, what will become

become of thoſe who are wholly taken up with ſerving the world? If we ought not to be over-anxious with regard to our progreſs in a devout life; what ſhall we ſay of thoſe who are inconſolable and deſponding, when fortune hath not given them what ſhe ſeem'd to promiſe them, or hath taken away what ſhe had given? What ſhall we ſay of *Job*'s wife, who was not ſatisfied with condemning the holy indifference of her husband, but would have made him rebellious againſt the decrees of God, and who ſaid to him in mockery, that he had nothing more to do but to kiſs the hands of his murderer, and bleſs the power that had made him miſerable?

It is true ſometimes we follow the will of God, but very ſeldom with all the liberty and all the obedience that is requiſite: We follow him not, he rather draws us after him. We conform to his laws either by reſignation or indifference: By reſignation we ſuffer ourſelves to be carried along by his ordinances, as the heavens by the *primum mobile*; I mean that we ſtill retain ſome will of our own, but by truly chriſtian indifference we intirely go by his motions without the leaſt repugnancy. Indifference not only prefers the will of God to ours, as does reſignation, but it abſolutely yields to him; and by this means all our inclinations diſappear before the will of God, as

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the ſtars before the ſun. In ſhort we practiſe reſignation after the manner of ſuffering, and indifference in the way of pleaſing him: We ſuffer ourſelves to be carried along by reſignation, but walk freely by indifference. This follows as a legitimate child, the other as an hired ſervant; the one looks upon heaven as an inheritance, the other as a reward.

We may from hence judge that a perfect indifference is altogether a chriſtian virtue. The moſt reaſonable among the heathens were reſign'd to their gods, but it was rather through fear than love; they ſubmitted not with the like humility as we do to the guidance of providence. *Niobè* ceaſed not to blaſpheme in her misfortunes, tho' ſhe knew they came from heaven *; and ſhewed not leſs grief at the death of her children, upon knowing they were ſlain by the hand of a goddeſs. I know that ſhe was look'd upon by the heathens themſelves as one frantic with deſpair, and that they had women among them of as great conſtancy as might ſhame many in our days: But as great ſtrength of mind as the moſt reſolute among them ſhewed, it was ſtill but an imperfect reſignation; ſo far were they from being capable of that generous indifference, which the perfection of chriſtianity requires. Grace roots up our affections better than rea-

* Ovid. Met lib vi. ver. 195.

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ſon alone; if women then, notwithſtanding the aſſiſtance of both, ſtill give themſelves up to exceſs of paſſion, we cannot but think them as worthy of blame and puniſhment as the heathens themſelves.

CHAP. XVI.

Of LUXURY *and* AVARICE.

FOR the better ſtrengthening this diſcourſe, I ſhall begin with the ſentiment of a lady the moſt renowned in all antiquity. *Theano*, being ask'd what it was that could make any of her ſex more illuſtrious than others, anſwer'd, That it was enough for this purpoſe, *to be a good oeconomiſt*. Can we find any fault with the counſel of this lady! She applied not herſelf to the buſineſs of her family as ſome women do who underſtand nothing elſe; ſhe compoſed many very excellent books, and was eſteem'd as one of the moſt generous-ſpirited and beſt learned of her time; and yet to acquire the reputation of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, ſhe only preſcribes *good houſewifry*. She acted not like many of our days, who are either too contemplative or not enough ſo; who

who neglect all buſineſs if inclin'd to reading; or who deſpiſe all manner of exerciſe of the mind, if their humour prompts them to take care of their family. Tho' *Theano* lov'd books, ſhe applied not herſelf leſs to the decent employ of her ſex than to her own particular inclination.

Indeed it ſeems requiſite that women ſhould apply themſelves to houſewifry by way of buſineſs, and to ſtudy by way of diverſion. This is what falls to their lot in the opinion of St. *Paul* himſelf, who often recommends to them the care of their families. 'Tis the opinion alſo of *Ariſtotle* and other philoſophers, who adviſe that the care of married perſons ought to be ſo divided that the wife ſhould be employ'd in domeſtic affairs, and the huſband with whatever elſe may concern them. I fancy our anceſtors intended hereby to ſhew, that ſuch employ was moſt proper for women as would keep them moſt within doors.

Beſides, being given as help-mates to man and not having ſtrength enough to follow much buſineſs, they thought good only to employ them in ſuch wherein there ſeem'd to be the leaſt danger. So St. *Paul* adviſeth * not to ſhew favour to, or entertain ſuch widows as *wander about from houſe to houſe*, and

* 1 Tim. v. 9—16.

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hazard themſelves in company, inſtead of loving the tranquillity of ſolitude.

An ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN therefore muſt not deſpiſe any thing that relates to good houſewifery; but ſhe is not however ſo intirely to give up herſelf thereto, as to neglect all regard for the inſtruction of the mind or the government of the paſſions. Nay, we are certainly more oblig'd to be ſoliçitous for the goods of the mind than thoſe of fortune: But it is to be feared, that many women take the contrary part, and are exceſſive in their deſires of wealth; it is to be feared they are infected with the ſhameful paſſion of avarice.

They have been accuſed of having a temper naturally avaritious. *Paſchaſius* ſays, "That "of all ſins there is none which ſhews ſo "much meanneſs of ſpirit as avarice; and "that for this reaſon it is more commonly "found among women and old folks; yet "with this difference, that with regard to "men it ſeldom poſſeſſes any but the old, "but as to women, it is attach'd to the ſex; "ſo that if men are covetous only in their old "age, women are ſo through their whole "life." This indeed is the ſentiment of a great writer, but to me it ſeems contrary to experience and matter of fact; for the inclination to evil being equal in both ſexes, there is no reaſon to ſay that women are more inclined

clined to avarice than men. But it is more neceſſary here than in other places to give them advice than praiſe, and, leaving the accuſations of their enemies, to endeavour to inſtruct rather than to defend them. To this end therefore I would have them conſider of how many crimes avarice may be the ſource. Sacred as well as profane philoſophy ſpeaks herein after the ſame manner; and as St. *Paul* declares *, that *it is the root of all evil*, *Democritus* ſays that it is *the metropolitan of all vices*. This perhaps is ſaid of men, but the truth of it may likewiſe be applied to women. For of what vice are they not capable who are covetous? We have elſewhere deſcribed the unhappineſs of thoſe who reſemble *Procris*, whoſe chaſtity was proof againſt perſuaſions, but not againſt bribes.

Nor do I intend here to enlarge upon the ſtories of *Danaè* or *Atalantè*, to ſhew that a ſhower of gold can find its way to the moſt cloſely kept, or golden apples ſtop the nimbleſt in their flight †. Laying aſide theſe fictions, I ſhall make uſe of arguments drawn from reaſon only, in order to oppoſe this ſhameful paſſion. I beg that women will conſider, that the three greateſt enemies to chaſtity are ambition, pleaſure, and avarice. Pleaſure ſtifles it, ambition betrays it, but avarice ſells it.

* 1 Tim. vi. 10. † Ovid. Met. lib. x. ver. 564.

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To court it to its ruin, ambition ſets forth grandeur; pleaſure, delights; and avarice, treaſures.

Avarice is the moſt ſhameful; it is the ſervant of the other two, it ſupplies them with maintenance. The better to comprehend this, we muſt obſerve with *Plutarch* *, that there are two ſorts of avarice, the one he calls penuriouſneſs, the other intemperance. The former makes us amaſs wealth with no other view than that of keeping and increaſing it; the other bids us get all we can to ſupply the expences of luxury. This is the more eaſily cured; becauſe it ſometimes gives over of itſelf, when it hath got wherewithal to ſatisfy its diſſolute deſires, whereas the other is never full. Hence thoſe that are penuriouſly covetous, are more blameable than thoſe that are ſo through intemperance; becauſe theſe ſeem to have ſome generoſity, loving good things only for the uſe of them, tho' it be with exceſs. We hate vipers more than lions, becauſe lions live on what they kill, but vipers have no advantage from any murder they chance to commit: Intemperance prevents not others from the enjoyment of good things; but penuriouſneſs ſeeks them for no other purpoſe than to deprive others of the uſe of them.

* See his treatiſe on covetouſneſs.

This ſort of avarice is like a fair but coquetiſh miſtreſs, who gives her humble ſervants all the trouble ſhe can without ever granting their reward. Riches acquired by penurious ſavings are like the waters of a lake which always continue in the ſame poſition: But thoſe which intemperance amaſſeth are like the waters of the rivers, that are always flowing down, and doing good at leaſt to ſome countries. This is the reaſoning of *Plutarch*, which may ſerve for both ſexes, but particularly for the fair. And I may ſay, that if the former ſort of avarice ſeems the more groſs, that of intemperance ſeems the more dangerous: And for this reaſon, the covetous through intemperance almoſt always join ambition or pleaſure to avarice; this, as I ſaid before, generally maintains the other two; and as the deſire of pleaſure and vanity is in many inſatiable, that of amaſſing wealth is ſo too. Avarice muſt neceſſarily often fill her coffers, when ambition and pleaſure are continually draining them. This infamous treaſurer is at a great deal of pains to ſupply the expences of theſe two prodigals. What riches can ſuffice the ambitious and the diſſolute!

Vitious women that are rich and they that are poor, attack chaſtity different ways: The poor ſell it, the rich purchaſe it; and ſuch is the ſhameful trade that avarice drives among women

women of different humours and a different fortune. Thus it is that ſome amaſs wealth to ſupply their expences, and others are conſtrain'd to do it from having been extravagant. Thus it is they ſometimes run from one extreme into another, being covetous in order to be prodigal: Laſtly, thus it is that ſome women would not be covetous, were it not that they are either voluptuous or ambitious.

We have elſewhere ſpoken of the bad effects of voluptuouſneſs, we ſhall here ſpeak a word or two concerning thoſe of ambition when join'd with avarice. What can be more ridiculous than to ſee *Phrynè*, who had been hoarding treaſure all her life, offer to expend all her riches in a moment? She gave to the temple of *Venus* a ſtatue of ſolid gold, with this inſcription, *From the intemperance of* Greeks; but not contented with this, ſhe offer'd to rebuild the walls of *Thebes*, that had an hundred gates, provided only this inſcription might be ſet thereon, *Phrynè* rebuilt what *Alexander* had demoliſhed.

I ſhall paſs by the avarice of the daughter of king *Cleophas*, and her fond deſire of building a pyramid with the wealth ſhe had got, that ſhe might publiſh one ſin by another, and leave to poſterity the ſhameful tokens of her ill-ſpent life: As alſo of that lady who

expreſs'd ſuch a violent paſſion for *Veſpaſian*, when it was manifeſt that ſhe affected the treaſures of that emperor rather than his good graces *. And likewiſe the fair *Agnes* in the time of *Charles* VII. who gave no leſs to the place where ſhe was interr'd than 60000 crowns, to teſtify the gain ſhe had made of the moſt infamous trade in the world.

I intend not I ſay to make uſe of ſuch examples, however ſerviceable they might be to give more horror to this ſhameful paſſion; tho' I ſay we might delineate this crime in a diſcourſe that treats of innocence, with the ſame intention that we ſometimes ſee devils painted in a church. But I am content with attacking *en paſſant* the avarice which hiſtory condemns in ſome women, in order to oppoſe that of others, who have not more virtue, but perhaps more cunning and better fortune.

Laſtly, I am ſatisfied with obſerving that when we have any deſign of amaſſing wealth in order to be the more extravagant, we act in this manner againſt our own reſolution. God, for the puniſhment of the covetous, permits that they ſhould ſpend in one day what they have been many years ſcraping together; he permits them to open their hands with great profuſion, having long

* Suetonius, *in the life of* Veſpaſian, §. 22.

kept

kept them cloſe by the moſt ſordid penury.

This is what women ought to conſider, the better to underſtand the vile effects of this avarice of intemperance; but as the moſt powerful remedy againſt it, it is neceſſary they ſhould learn that mediocrity which they ought to perſue, both in expending and amaſſing wealth: This is the prudence that teaches them to do both with decency; this is what ſhews that the means ought to be juſt, and the end honeſt. We muſt not get wealth by thieving, becauſe this is a forbidden means; nor be luxurious, becauſe this is an end very blameable.

This is the rule to be obſerv'd, if we would not run into the extremes that are vitious. It is prudence which ſhews us what we are; and that a peaſant may be prodigal in doing that which can ſcarce be call'd liberal in a princeſs. Laſtly, it is this, which to induce us to be good managers, diſcovers to us that the largeſt ſums of money are made up of ſo many ſmall parcels; and that as great affluence often comes from many little ſavings, ſo great poverty may enſue from many trifling expences *. For this reaſon *Cato* ſays there

* There is a great deal of meaning in that ſaying of a late frugal old gentleman, *My boy, take care of your half-pence; guineas will take care of themſelves.*

are two ways of gaining, agriculture and good management; becauſe as agriculture gathers great crops from having ſowed many ſmall grains, ſo a good manager by many ſmall ſavings reaps the fruits of his oeconomy in great abundance.

Since then there may be as great abuſe in ſpending money as in hoarding it, having ſpoken of the ſeveral ſorts of avarice, we ſhall now, in order to render this diſcourſe more uſeful, briefly treat of its oppoſite luxury. This ſeems indeed the more common malady of the ſex, without excepting thoſe of low condition and mean birth. They muſt be expenſive let the conſequence be what it will; there is nothing they will not do or ſuffer for this; it is of no concernment to them to expoſe their honour, and to act like *Tarpeia* *,

* *Tarpeia*, daughter of *Tarpeius*, governor of the capitol, promiſed the *Sabins* to betray the fort into their hands, provided they would give her what they wore on their left arms, meaning their bracelets. *Tatius*, the captain of the *Sabins*, by this means entring the capitol, commanded his men, in regard of his contract, not to refuſe *Tarpeia* the leaſt part of what they wore on their left arms; and firſt took the bracelet off his arm, and threw it together with his buckler upon her; the reſt doing the like, ſhe was thereby ſmother'd and preſs'd to death. Which reminds *Plutarch* of a ſaying of *Julius Cæſar*, in the caſe of *Rhymitacles* the *Thracian*, *He loved the treaſon, but hated the traitor*. *Plutarch* in the life of *Romulus*.—Parallel of *Greeks* and *Romans*.—*Livy* lib. 1.

who

who was buried under the reward that ſhe herſelf had demanded, and ſtifled beneath the bucklers ſhe received of the *Sabins*; they regard not the ruining their families or conſuming their patrimony. If we approve not of their luxury, they are always in a bad humour; one will never put on a ſmiling look till ſhe has got a richer gown, and another is continually grumbling for a finer equipage.

It is example that ſpoils them; they are ſumptuous out of mere envy to one another, and oftentimes without any regard to their fortune or extraction. But their vanity goes farther; whatever merit a man may have, he cannot pleaſe them without imitating them in luxury; nay, they will ſay that the moſt ill-ſhapen coxcomb is a very clever fellow, only becauſe he is extravagant. Is not this a ſtrange way of thinking in theſe coquettes? Muſt we not believe that they have renounc'd all virtue, when they give ſo great preference to the goods of fortune?

Was I to oppoſe this blindneſs with general reaſons, ſuch as would ſerve both ſexes, I might declare that luxury is contrary to nature, which is always contented with a little, while nothing can ſatisfy fancy; that if the rich were not to abuſe their wealth there could be no poor; becauſe if there was no ſuperfluity there could be no want of neceſſa-

ries; that the world hath wherewithal to maintain its inhabitants; and that ſuch as amaſs or who ſpend too much are, thoſe who hinder others from having what is uſeful for the enjoyment of life.

From reaſon I might paſs on to religion, and ſhew that nothing is ſo contrary to chriſtianity as luxury; becauſe it is not only an enemy to all modeſty but alſo to charity. That the holy ſcripture accuſes of murder thoſe who refuſe nouriſhment to others that are in want, when they have it in their power to relieve them; that, to turn them from this fooliſh extravagance, and oblige them to act more righteouſly, God himſelf is pleaſed to demand ſomething of them in the name of the poor; and yet to ask nothing more of them than a ſhare of thoſe good things which he himſelf has given them, and of which he rather made them ſtewards than proprietors. Theſe ſeem to me ſtrong arguments; and tho' they may be proper for both ſexes, yet women may apply them to themſelves, by thinking it a ſhame for them to be ſo extravagantly ſumptuous, as they are reaſonable creatures and chriſtians.

Yet I am not content with theſe arguments, ſtrong as they are, and therefore ſhall add ſome that are more particular. The exceſſive extravagance which they affect, is not only contrary to

to the modeſty and charity, but alſo to the chaſtity of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. The ſin of luxury gives birth as well as a name to another ſtill more infamous; the chaſte are generally baſhful, and the extravagantly ſumptuous almoſt always bold and inſolent. Whatever apology may be made for the vitious, I can never think ſuch coſtly ſumptuouſneſs altogether innocent; eſpecially I cannot ſee how it can be approv'd of by chriſtians. I cannot comprehend how they ſhould have the leaſt thoughts of eternity, or that they make the leaſt reflexion upon the religion they profeſs. Certainly they would live with more modeſty if they in the leaſt conſider'd, in what manner their vanity may poſſibly be puniſhed: But did I ſay their vanity? Rather their inhumanity, when they not only behold around them, without the leaſt pity, many miſerable objects, whoſe ſilent prayers ask nothing more of them than a ſmall ſhare of their ſuperfluities; but even when they are always ſtudying to injure others to ſatisfy their luxury, and make no conſcience of robbing them even of the neceſſaries of life to ſupply their unprofitable extravagance.

Without doubt this thought will chagrin them, and they will think this diſcourſe ſomewhat too ſevere; to accommodate it therefore to their weakneſs, and not to blind them with

with the too glaring light of chriſtianity, I ſhall be ſatisfied if they would only open their eyes to that of the *Gentiles* and heathen world. I ſhall ſet before them the ſingle example of a pagan lady, whom all antiquity eſteem'd for the averſion ſhe ſhew'd to luxury.

Let them reflect upon the modeſty of *Phocion*'s wife *, who was often praiſed in a full ſenate with the general approbation of the ſpectators, and had gained univerſal applauſe from all that knew her. When one of her friends was ſhewing her her rings, necklaces, and jewels; *What is the ſplendor of all theſe treaſures*, ſays ſhe, *when compared with that which beams from the virtues of* Phocion; *I glory more in being his wife than was I to be array'd with the proudeſt ornaments that* Athens *or the world could furniſh.* This lady, ſuch an enemy to luxury, was not of a mean ſpirit or low fortune; her husband had been choſen twenty

* *Plutarch* has not mention'd the name of this lady, but in his life of *Phocion* he adds to what is here reported of her; that, when at the acting a new tragedy, one of the principal actors who was to perform the part of a queen, refuſed going upon the ſtage, becauſe he wanted a proper habit; *Melantius* who gave the entertainment, puſh'd him on, ſaying, *You are fine enough, look there on* Phocion's *wife; but you, forſooth, are for ſetting our ladies a bad example, and filling their heads with pride and vanity.* This ſpeech was overheard by the audience, and receiv'd with applauſe by the whole houſe.

times

times the general of the *Athenians*; yet when ſhe walk'd in the city, ſhe was attended but with one ſervant, and was always as modeſt in her dreſs and equipage as ſome ladies of our days ſtudy to be ſumptuous and extravagant.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the HUMILITY *of an accompliſh'd* WOMAN.

TO ſhew that the infidels themſelves thought humility a neceſſary accompliſhment in women, I ſhall exhibit the commendations which *Plutarch* beſtows on the wife of *Pompey*. Behold the picture which a heathen writer hath drawn of an ACCOMPLIHS'D WOMAN, in depainting the merit and modeſty of this *Roman* lady. " *This lady*, ſays he, *beſides the charms of her* " *beauty, had many attractive qualities from* " *her education*; *ſhe had made a great progreſs* " *in moſt parts of learning*; *ſhe was well ſkil-* " *led in the mathematics, and took great plea-* " *ſure in hearing the diſcourſes of philoſophers,* " *or reading their works, not without receiving* " *profit therefrom. But what crowned all the* " *reſt was that theſe extraordinary qualifications*

" *ren-*

" *render'd her not proud or petulant, as young*
" *ladies are apt to be who can boaſt of the like*
" *advantages in birth, fortune, and education.*"

It is *Plutarch* that gives this leſſon of humility; it is from an heathen they may learn modeſty, and that, as incomparable as they may be in the beauties of the face or mind, they merit not the title of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, unleſs they are humble. Whatever ſome may think, this virtue was in no ſmall practice among the *Gentile* philoſophers; they taught in their ſchools the knowledge of ſelf, which is generally attended with humility: They blamed ambition and arrogance; and tho' indeed they might not have this virtue in ſo perfect a degree as we have; yet they evinc'd their having it in ſome meaſure, ſince even their poets made war againſt ambition by deſcribing the overthrow of the giants, the fall of *Phaeton*, and the death of *Salmoneus* by lightning *.

But to give a greater light in this matter, and to prevent women from being deceiv'd in their judgment with regard to the humility here recommended, I muſt firſt obſerve to them, that there are five ſorts of humility; the ſtupid, the forced, the worldly, the moral, and the chriſtian: The two laſt only are

* He pretended to ſet up for a god, and to imitate thunder, by driving his chariot over a bridge of braſs.

commend-

commendable; the other three are defective. The ſtupid is the humility of a brute animal, the forced is the humility of devils, and the worldly the humility of a cheat.

Stupid humility is nothing elſe but a defect in the conſtitution, and the want of ſpirit and courage: 'Tis not an eaſy matter to judge of the difference; we ſometimes take natural ſimplicity for moral humility. Many appear humble, who are only ſilly and ſtupid; if they had more ſpirit, they would not ſeem ſo ſober and reſerv'd: It is not a virtue of the ſoul, but the defect of nature. And yet, tho' it be not commendable, it is happy; becauſe the vulgar, who only judge by appearances, eſteem it as much as that which is form'd from a modeſt opinion of ourſelves.

Forced humility is alſo as defective, becauſe it is an abaſement by conſtraint; the devils may be ſaid to be humbled, tho' they be not humble; therefore it is not properly humility, but only humiliation: It cannot be a virtue without having our conſent. Humility muſt not be thrown down headlong, but deſcend gently of itſelf to its own center; it muſt have a natural and not a violent motion; or indeed if it be puſh'd, it muſt approve of ſuch violence.

Laſtly, worldly humility cannot be called a virtue, becauſe it concerns not the inward part, but belongs only to the outward appearance. It is oftentimes vanity in diſguiſe, which ſeeks glory

glory in turning away from it, and makes not its congeès but in order to receive them; it lends out honour upon uſury. If this oil deſcends at firſt to the bottom of the glaſs when poured in upon other liquors, it ſoon aſcends to the top; and is condeſcending at the beginning, only to be more imperious in the end.

There are but two ſorts of humility that deſerve eſteem. Still we muſt own, if the moral is commendable on the account of its being voluntary, and its end juſt and honeſt, that it is not yet perfect without the aſſiſtance of the chriſtian, which is form'd in a more excellent manner, and hath eyes to ſee more clearly our vileneſs and the infinite perfections of God. The humility of chriſtians ought to go much farther than that of heathens. If their gods deſcended upon earth and appear'd to them, as their fables ſay, in the likeneſs of man, it was in order to commit ſome lewd action: But the God of the chriſtians has not only given them leſſons of humility, but himſelf hath ſet them an example. It is our peculiar advantage to have an humble God; and to ſee ſupreme greatneſs lodg'd in extreme lowlineſs; it is this that obligeth us more than others to the practice of this virtue; ſince there never were any nations that worſhip, like us, a God who was pleaſed to humble himſelf to the very center of ſhame and pain.

But

But to treat of this in another manner, according to my common ſtile and the promiſe I before made, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew that this virtue is not only neceſſary to ſalvation, but to the well-being of all ſociety; and that it is not only proper for the inſtitution of a devotèe, but abſolutely requiſite to form the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. Let us conſider what qualities are moſt-deſirable, in order to pleaſe in converſation, and ſucceed in the affairs of life. Now, nothing can contribute more to this purpoſe, and nothing can be more lovely than ſincerity, ſweetneſs of temper, fidelity, and patience. And are not theſe the four fair effects which divinity itſelf attributes to humility? Are they not the rays of this ſun, the rivers from this ſpring? True humility is not deceitful, churliſh, inconſtant, or paſſionate. It bears with the faults of others, it ſpeaks with courteouſneſs, it acts with pure ſimplicity, it loves with conſtancy.

There is no converſation more agreeable than that of a perſon truly humble; on the contrary, nothing can be more inſupportable than the converſation of the proud. To judge of this the better, let us take a view of the diſdainful and ſelf-ſufficient. They are inflexibly ſtubborn in their opinion, they are continually boaſting of themſelves, they are deceitful and without affection; above all, they are

are ungrateful, and think they ſufficiently recompenſe the ſervices and devoirs that are paid them, by ſeeming to be pleaſed therewith. Laſtly, they are revengeful; and as there are no praiſes ſo great as can ſatisfy them, there is no injury ſo ſmall that will not fling them into the moſt ſpiteful paſſion. Is it not true then that without humility it is impoſſible to pleaſe in converſation, and ſucceed in the buſineſs of life? Is it not true that this is a virtue which reaſon alone ſufficiently recommends, tho' religion had not commanded the practice of it?

Methinks I hear ſome opponents to this virtue ſay, that it is not poſſible to be humble without being incapable of any great undertaking, and that humility contains a certain meanneſs in it quite oppoſite to generoſity. But I muſt own I think there is as much ignorance as falſity in this opinion. Humility is no more contrary to courage than clemency is to juſtice. This error ſprings from hence; there are two virtues in morality, which ſeem incompatible, tho' in effect they are only different and not contrary to each other. Theſe are magnanimity and modeſty, which hinder our mind from wavering, and the not being guilty of any diſorder when it lifts itſelf up, or is caſt down. Theſe two excellent habits are as the two tropics of reaſon,

reaſon, beyond which it ought never to paſs while it expects to enjoy a proper light.

I think then it is manifeſt they may be found together in the ſame perſon, and in the ſame action. The ſingle example of *Judith* ſhews clearly this truth; for without any confidence in her own ſtrength, ſhe conceiv'd the moſt brave and important deſign that could poſſibly be put into action. Was ſhe not both humble and magnanimous in her undertaking? Had ſhe not humility when ſhe fell down on her knees before God, and acknowledged her weakneſs? And did ſhe want courage, when ſhe march'd through the armies of her enemies, and with her own hands cut off the head of proud *Holofernes?* And to paſs from ſacred hiſtory to profane, do we not find the ſame truth confirm'd in the example of the wife of *Pompey? Plutarch* obſerves that ſhe was humble, but he obſerves likewiſe that ſhe was very brave and noble: She was not leſs courageous than modeſt, when in the diſgrace of her husband ſhe teſtified an incomparable reſolution, not only in attending him every where, but even in giving him more comfort than the philoſopher *Cratippus*.

Humility takes not away courage, but regulates it; or to ſpeak according to chriſtian philoſophy, it knows as well to lift up the eyes as to caſt them down. After it has conſider'd its

its own weakneſs, it has regard to the power of God; it relies not on human aid but on the divine. It is on this account that humility is ſo magnanimous while vanity is ſo cowardly. I need not perſue this matter any further, it is enough to go back to experience, which ſhews but too often, that women who are proud are incapable of any great undertaking. Ambitious women have never any generoſity in their deſigns, nor patience in their afflictions; as they are inſolent in good fortune, they are as ſoon dejected in bad.

This is the ſource of their blindneſs; as they never made any reflexions on what they are, when upon any accident they ſee their weakneſs, they are quite terrified and loſe their courage; whereas the humble by continually employing themſelves in ſelf-knowledge, are not terrified at any thing when they conſider their own defects; on the contrary, in proportion as they know their imperfections, they make uſe of the ſolid arguments of reaſon, and the further light of religion to ſtrengthen them; while the proud, blind with ſelf-love, take no care of applying remedies to their defects, ſince they know them not, and are even afraid to learn what they are.

We are at laſt come to the true ſource of humility, when we ſpeak of the knowledge of ſelf: This ſcience is very difficult and very rare.

rare. To learn other ſciences we want maſters and tutors; but as to this, there is, honeſtly ſpeaking, no one that can inſtruct us but ourſelves. We muſt deſcend into the ſoul, as to an inner ſchool, to learn an art, of which we are the ſubject, the preceptors, and the ſcholars. And indeed we can ſcarce meet with any perſon who does not aſſiſt us in concealing our faults from ourſelves. If a woman is of high condition, we dare not inform her; if ſhe be a woman of little conſequence, we do not think it worth our trouble. We are either wanting in affection or freedom. Flatterers will tell the bold they are good-humour'd, the cruel that they are generous, and coquettes that they are genteel and know the art of animating their beauty.

Theſe then are the principal enemies to ſelf-knowledge. The ſcornful and calumnious are alike enemies thereto; and as on one hand flattery gives us more merit than we really have, detraction on the other hand finds out blemiſhes and imperfections that we have not. 'Tis alſo true, that, rightly to know ourſelves, we muſt not think that we are either richer or poorer than we really are. But after all, we muſt confeſs that detraction does not put us in ſo much danger as flattery. As flattery makes us ſtill go farther from ourſelves, detraction makes us enter within. We

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are more curious to examine whether we are guilty of a crime when we are accuſed of it, than to inquire whether we are worthy of praiſe when it is beſtowed upon us. As we are more apt to think well of ourſelves than ill, ſo we reflect not ſo much upon flattery as upon detraction. This therefore is more uſeful, as it contributes to our knowing what we are, while flattery prevents it.

Beſides, the ſlanderer harms us not ſo much in painting our merit leſs than it really is, as the flatterer in making it greater. Slanderers only concern themſelves with what we are in the opinion of others, intending to abuſe them to our detriment; but flatterers endeavour to abuſe us in ourſelves, and to ſeduce our own judgment. The former are enemies to our reputation, the latter to our conſcience: It is alſo againſt theſe enemies that we muſt employ the knowledge of ſelf. As it is in the inner part where flattery caſts clouds and darkneſs in order to blind us, it is there that we muſt ſet up this flambeau: And undoubtedly ſelf-love will fly away, as *Cupid* did from *Pſyche*, as ſoon as this lamp is lighted up.

Let it not be objected here, that humility ought to cloſe her eyes upon whatever good we have; for by juſt reaſoning on this virtue, we ſhall find that it is founded no leſs upon the conſideration of our merit than upon that of

of our imperfections. I may go further and ſay with *M. de Sales*, that we are more oblig'd to be humble from conſidering the good qualities that we are endowed with, than by regarding thoſe we want. But I ſhall give you the words of this great biſhop inſtead of referring you to his introduction *. "Many are unwil-
"ling and afraid to think on the favours
"that God hath particularly beſtowed upon
"them, for fear of being guilty of vain-glory;
"but herein they are greatly deceived, for
"ſince the true means of attaining the love of
"God is the conſideration of his benefits;
"the more we know them the more we ſhall
"love him; and as particular favours work
"more powerfully upon us than common, ſo
"ought they to be conſider'd more attentive-
"ly. Surely nothing can humble us ſo much
"before the mercy of God as his manifold
"bleſſings. There is no reaſon to fear that
"the knowledge of what he hath done for us
"ſhould puff us up, provided we are atten-
"tive to this truth, *That all that is good in*
"*us is not from ourſelves.* On the contrary
"the lively conſideration of favours received
"makes us humble; for knowledge begets
"thankfulneſs."

* An excellent treatiſe called *An introduction to a devout life.* To which *P. d'Ablancourt*, in his defence of our author thinks theſe diſcourſes may properly be called *an introduction.*

But

But ſince I have borrow'd theſe arguments from this great writer, let me alſo borrow the example he makes uſe of in the ſequel of his diſcourſe. "The *Virgin*, ſays he, confeſſes "that God had done marvellous things for "her; and yet this confeſſion of favours re-"ceiv'd hinder'd her not from being the moſt "humble as well as the moſt perfect of her "ſex." What reaſon is there why we ſhould not humble ourſelves the more in proportion to the bleſſings we have receiv'd? Have we not more cauſe to worſhip God, the more clearly we ſee his goodneſs in the benefits conferred upon us? But to return; I have elſewhere ſaid, that there are ſome who diſown the good things they have received through ingratitude; and here I ſay, they ſometimes do the ſame through vanity.

This is the falſe humility of the age. Many ſay they are imperfect, but it is with a deſign that we ſhould ſay the contrary. They fly from glory, that it may run after them. This is not true humility, becauſe it ſhews itſelf; it is not enough for humility to hide other virtues, it muſt alſo hide itſelf; it is to be vain, to deſire to be thought humble. Chriſtian modeſty affects not to ſhew its imperfections any more than its merit; becauſe as there is vanity in the one, there is artifice in the other. True humility is ingenuous and ſimple, if it diſcovers its goodneſs to a neighbour,

bour, it is in order to edify him; if it ſhews its imperfections, it is for fear of deceiving him.

If this reaſoning ſeems too fine-ſpun for ſome women, I muſt ſend them back again to the ſchool of ſelf-knowledge, whether they have any merit or not; if they have not, ſhame will make them humble; if they have any merit, a grateful acknowledgment will do the ſame, provided that their ſight be not darken'd by ſelf-love: Let them conſider themſelves as much as they pleaſe, they are in no danger of the fate of *Narciſſus*, who fatally fell in love with himſelf. This ſcience can never hurt them; and as *Aurora* ſeems both the mother and ſiſter of the ſun, the knowledge of ſelf ſeems both the effect and cauſe of humility. It is the ſpring and river of it; it gives it being, and then receives the ſame from it.

Yet as this matter may be carried infinitely further, and on which ſide ſoever we look upon ourſelves we ſhall ſtill find reaſon to be humble; it ſeems proper to pitch upon ſome particular reflexion, to draw the more profit from the knowledge of ourſelves. Women have need but of one conſideration to induce them to be humble; and to this purpoſe without uſing thoſe reaſons which they have in common with men, as they are chriſtians let them ſeriouſly examine the ſimplicity and

obedience that our religion requires of them. *As the church*, ſaith the holy *Spirit*, *is ſubject unto* Chriſt, *ſo let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing* *. This is their rule, this their true remedy againſt vanity. — For what can be objected to this compariſon? This law was not made by any tyranny of man; it is God himſelf who preſcribes it to them, to retain them in their duty, and to hinder the effect of their inclination, ſhould it affect dominion when obedience is their proper ſphere.

I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with an obſervation, which will make the moſt vain aſhamed, if it does not create humility. When the oracle ordain'd that a tripod of gold ſhould be given to the moſt wiſe, the ſeven ſages of *Greece* were ſo modeſt, as to refer it one to another †; but when the oracle commanded that a golden apple ſhould be given to the faireſt, the three goddeſſes ſhew'd not ſo much reſervedneſs; they all three pleaded their cauſe before the judge, and ſought to be preferred one to the other. Thus three women diſputed for the prize of beauty; and ſeven wiſe men contended who ſhould refuſe the prize of wiſdom.

* Epheſ. v. 24. Col. iv. 18. 1 Cor. xi. 3, 9. xiv. 34. 1 Tim. ii. 9—12. Gen. iii. 16. Eſth. i. 22. Prov. xxxi. 10. Eccluſ. xxvi. 13—22. xxxvi. 23, 24.

† See *Plutarch* in the life of *Solon*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the CONSCIENCE.

AS chief magiſtrates often order the puniſhment of a crime in the ſame place where it was committed, ſo in the conſcience is ſin puniſh'd with bitter remorſe, even in the ſame place where it was conceiv'd by luſt: There it finds its puniſhment as well as birth. Vice, like the viper, tears the bowels where it is engender'd. What torment do ſome women undergo from ſin? They indeed travel in pain, as did their firſt mother. It is the curſe entail'd on all thoſe who liſten to the tempter. Let them be as ſubtle as they will, their artifices are at length diſcover'd, or prove vain. They are taken in their own toils, like *Arachne*. The poets ſay that *Io* being changed into a cow, inſtead of concealing herſelf, mark'd her name, wherever ſhe went, with her foot*; ſurely we may ſay the ſame of thoſe whom ſin hath changed into beaſts, in thinking to hide their deſigns they generally diſcover them and betray themſelves.

* Ovid. Met. lib. i. ver. 649.

But ſuppoſing their ſubtlety as ſucceſsful as it is criminal: What tortures do they ſtill undergo? They are always in alarm; they are like the *Spartan* boy, who for fear of being found out for thieving, ſuffered the young fox he had ſtoln to prey upon his bowels *. Tho' they may hide their inquietude from others, they cannot prevent it from vexing them within; tho' they eſcape the evidence of men, they cannot fly from that of their conſcience. Do what they can, being alone they often bluſh when the ſhadow of their ſin preſents itſelf before them. And when in company, they think every one jeſts upon them, or that they equivocate; ſo dangerous an interpreter is their fear. What trouble are they at to get clear of an intrigue? They are continually in fear leſt their galant ſhould blab or leave them. If they are aſſur'd of his diſcretion, they cannot be ſo of his conſtancy. If it is a trouble to them to part from confidence, it is not leſs to maintain it. They are always in fear leſt any one ſhould corrupt the fidelity of their confidents, knowing that ſuch as ſerve for hire ſcruple not to change their maſters for better wages.

Look on *Phædra* when in love with *Hippolitus* †: How great is their anxiety! All the

* *See* Plutarch *in the life of* Lycurgus. Montaign's *eſſays*, lib. ii. cap. 32.

† Ovd. epiſt. *Euripides*, Hippolitus.

paſſions

paſſions combine together to diſturb her ſoul; ſhe is tormented with love, deſire, fear, hope, rage, and grief at the ſame time. May we not ſay that ſhe is tortur'd by all the furies, tho' they are nothing but her own thoughts? What pains did *Fauſta* take in the like horrid amour for *Criſpus*, and afterwards for revenge! cauſing him to be condemn'd to death upon falſe accuſations, and being herſelf ſoon after condemn'd, when *Conſtantine* had diſcover'd her wickedneſs! ſuch is the dreadful uneaſineſs of the guilty.

I grant they may ſometimes ſucceed in their deſigns, and meet with no great difficulty in committing ſin; yet is it not enough to deter them, to conſider the remorſe of thoſe who have fallen therein? Their conſcience is always upon the rack; there is no freedom in their converſation; we can ſee them but at certain times; they are indiſpos'd almoſt every hour of the day; aſſignations and love-letters are their full employ. They are exceeding bad company, ſeeming always thoughtful and melancholy; one is troubled at the preſence of her husband; another is chagrin'd at his coming in unſeaſonably. Had we no other reaſon to produce, I think this would be ſufficient; at leaſt we ought to preſerve innocence for the ſake of liberty, and ſhun vice in order to ſhun fear. It is impoſſible to be

in a good humour without having a good conſcience. True peace and ſin can never live together; we can never be vitious and content at the ſame time.

How happy are the innocent! how ſweet is their converſation! how free! the contentment they feel within diſplays itſelf around, and is viſible in the countenance. The gaiety which ſprings from virtue ſhews itſelf in converſation and in every the leaſt action: 'Tis an holy odour which perfumes even the dreſs, and communicates itſelf to every thing that is near it. *Plutarch* ſays, that the ſweet odour of *Antiſthenes* perfumed his ragged clothes *, while there came a rank ſmell from the fine robes of *Anchiſes*. Anxiety is cover'd under the appearance of grandeur, while true gaiety reigns in the ſouls of thoſe who preſerve their innocence, be their outward appearance what it will. The guilty fly when none perſueth, except it be the ſhadow of their ſin, which conſtantly attends them.

I know the unfortunate may be in bad plight as well as the criminal; but there is a great deal of difference between them: Affliction does not trouble us like ſin. Fortune

* I cannot recollect where *Plutarch* ſays this of *Antiſthenes*, but in his *Sympoſiacs*, lib. i. quæſt. 6. he ſays that the body of *Alexander* ſcented his clothes with an aromatical odour.

cannot

cannot affect us but externally, but crimes harrow us within by means of remorſe: Beſides, miſery is not aſhamed to ſhew itſelf, like wickedneſs. This cauſeth horror, that only pity, and then the teſtimony of conſcience is a powerful comforter to the innocent, but a cruel executioner to the vitious. To the innocent, in the darkeſt night of affliction God oftentimes makes ſome ſtars appear; they find ſome drops of ſweet water in the ocean of bitterneſs. Whatever difficulty they meet with in preſerving innocence, they have ſtill that within which animates and encourages them to withſtand all menaces and aſſaults.

And as innocence is the greateſt of all good, women of ſpirit and courage have not ſpared life itſelf for the preſervation of it. Let us ſee what ſome have done to eſchew vice, and eſpecially to defend themſelves from thoſe who attack'd their chaſtity. When *Pelagia* was condemn'd to the ſtews, ſhe begg'd ſhe might have time to dreſs herſelf as fine as poſſible, ſaying, ſhe ſhould be aſhamed to appear in deſhabille. She re-enter'd her houſe, where having dreſs'd herſelf like a bride, and taken the chaplet and noſegay in her hand, ſhe ſaid, "Shall I permit "this body to be ſullied which I have devot-"ed to God? It may ſtill continue pure in "pain, but it cannot in pleaſure. It would

" be happier under the hands of an execu-
" tioner, than of thoſe infamous wretches
" who wait without for it. It is true, I am
" afraid to die, but I am more afraid to
" break my vow; I dread perjury more
" than martyrdom, and had rather part
" with my life than my fidelity. I ought
" not to call any perſons my executioners,
" but thoſe that prevent me from dying:
" And in ſuch an extremity death, however
" procured, would be leſs violence than to be
" forced to live. When I ſee no poſſibility
" of a retreat in this world to ſhun their in-
" famous attempts; what wonder is it that I
" ſhou'd deſire to paſs into the next to avoid
" their perſuit? This ſurely would not be ſo
" much a murder as a flight. This is but to
" ſuffer a leſs evil to avoid a greater: But if
" this action be criminal, I hope the deſign
" will mitigate the offenſe."

After ſhe had pronounc'd theſe words ſhe flung herſelf from the top of the houſe to the no leſs aſtoniſhment than vexation of thoſe who waited her coming out: The judges offended at this her reſolution, order'd her ſiſters and her mother to be condemn'd to the ſame place: But the mother having notice of it took her daughters in her hand, and led them along, as if they were dancing, to the ſide of the river where they leap'd in, the mother

mother leading the way, and encouraging them to this reſolute action. I know that murder can never be juſtified, nor can it be right to commit one ſin to avoid another; however blameable therefore theſe women might be, we may at leaſt learn from theſe examples the value that ſome have ſet upon chaſtity.

In this rank likewiſe we may put *Sophronia*, whom St. *Auſtin* ſo much admires, and makes no ſcruple to call her a martyr. *Maxentius* being in love with her, and having made ſome overtures to her, ſhe complain'd of it to her husband, who dared not to oppoſe the chief magiſtrate of *Rome*, and was more afraid to loſe his office than his wife. He diſſembled like another *Mecænas:* And when one day *Sophronia* found herſelf preſs'd by *Maxentius*, and that ſhe had no remedy under her misfortune, ſhe deſired likewiſe ſome time to equip herſelf; but inſtead of other ornaments ſhe took up a ſword and ſlew herſelf. In this manner St. *Auſtin* commends her, and gives her the advantage over the Roman *Lucretia*. *Sophronia* ſlew herſelf as it were by a ſudden inſpiration; *Lucretia*, in a fit of deſpair. I need not mention any other examples of this ſort, or run through the catalogue of thoſe who have ſuffer'd death for the preſervation of their innocence or their re-

ligion. Let us ſee what opinion the heathens themſelves had of the virtue of women, and in what abomination they held the vitious. Why did they ſo eſteem their religious but on account of their virtue? Did not God himſelf ſet a mark of approbation on the virginity of the heathens in endowing the *Sibyls* with the gift of propheſy? The *Gentiles*, ſaith St. *Jerom*, ſo highly eſteem'd the purity of women, that they have placed a *virgin*, but no other woman among the ſtars.

How greatly were the *Veſtals* honour'd, and how ſeverely puniſh'd! we may ſee from theſe what the ancients thought of the vice and virtue of women. Tho' *Artemiſia* died in fighting againſt the *Lacedæmonians*, they erected ſtatues, and conferr'd on her no leſs honours than if ſhe had been of their own party *. When ſome young women were preſented to *Cyrus*, among whom was *Aſpaſia*, the reſt being intirely at his diſpoſal, *Aſpaſia* with the moſt ſedate countenance kept her eyes fix'd upon the ground. *Cyrus* approaching to ſalute her, ſhe lifted up her hand to ſtrike him, which ſo charm'd the monarch that he diſmiſs'd all the reſt, and detain'd *Aſpaſia* alone.

If innocence then had ſuch charms to attract the heathens themſelves, what ought it to

* Juſt. ii. 12. Aulus Gellius, x. 18.

have

have among us? Are not chriſtians more obliged to abominate vice than the pagans? Shall a woman that is addicted to vice take upon her the name of a *gentlewoman* any more in this age than in that of the *Gentiles?* The dread that we have of ſin is founded upon other threatnings than what were given to the heathens, who knew of no other puniſhments than thoſe they found in the poets, and were terrified only with fictions and fables. They likewiſe placed *Dido* in the *Elyſian* fields, as if after her amours and her deſpair ſhe had any right to a place of happineſs.

But let us conſult thoſe of better judgment; let us be aſhamed of ſuch blind guides, and to learn from heathens the eſteem we ought to have for virtue. Tho' we may read in *Cicero*, that *man hath nothing to fear but ſin*; and in *Plutarch*, *that it is ſin alone that can make us miſerable* *; yet we have other reaſons for this fear: The happineſs we loſe thereby and the pain it will one day torment us with, are of much greater importance than any arguments we can find among the *Gentiles*, who propoſed no other reward for innocence than theſe three things, the tranquillity of the ſoul, the approbation of the world, and the eſcape from corporal puniſhment.

* See his treatiſe on this ſubject.

We

We conſider ſin in another reſpect, as it is at enmity with God, and its conſequence eternal puniſhment. Both fear and love contribute to preſerve us in our virtue. Theſe are other thoughts than what the heathens had; there is no doubt then that chriſtian women would have more care of the inward part, if they examin'd as they ought what a mean dwelling it becomes after ſin; if they conſider'd the dangerous wound that it gives the ſoul; the fatal ſhade that darkens the light of grace; the mortal privation that effaces God in our ſpirit, if I may ſo ſpeak, and blots us out of the number of his elect.

And if any take it amiſs that I ſhould enter ſo far into the points of religion, in endeavouring as I have done to ſtrike ſo great an horror of ſin; I beg they would only conſider what are the principal qualities that make the truly *good man* or the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. Surely, they are what they muſt learn from religion, not only among chriſtians but among the heathens themſelves. As all the world confeſs that an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN ought to have moral virtue, we muſt likewiſe own that ſhe ought to take care of her conſcience by loving virtue and dreading vice. Whatever qualities a woman may be endowed with among us, it is impoſſible ſhe ſhould be thoroughly accompliſh'd without being devout: She cannot

not merit this egregious title, as I have ſaid before in a former diſcourſe, without having the moral virtues; and juſtice which is one of the principal moral virtues cannot be without religion.

I grant then that in treating of this matter others have been contented with ſpeakingof their behaviour, and whatever regards external decency: But I had rather ſpeak of whatever regards the conſcience. Others talk of gentility; but I had rather they ſhould ſtudy virtue, and prefer the care of their mind to that of their beauty: I think it more neceſſary for them to adorn the inward part than the external. I think that by acquired parts and knowledge they would render the natural more certain, and never want any of thoſe qualities which civility demands to make them agreeable in company. As nature propoſes the production of the ſubſtance before that of accidents, ſo they ought to propoſe in the art of inſtruction, what is moſt ſolid and moſt neceſſary, before they addict themſelves to that which is only decent and leſs profitable. And as a painter can never ſucceed who takes more pains in the drapery than in the face, ſo I ſhould think my labour ill-beſtowed if, in drawing the picture of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, I had only painted the external ornaments, without touching her natural features and the true charms wherein all her beauty conſiſts. I

approve

approve of decency, I eſteem agreeableneſs, and love gentility: But ſtill this is not enough for the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN; ſhe muſt above all things ſtudy to conduct the mind, and preſerve the conſcience. She muſt firſt fix virtue in the will, after that, knowledge in the underſtanding; and laſtly, a genteel air in her countenance and behaviour.

CHAP. XIX.

Of CHRISTIAN VIRTUE;

As it is abſolutely neceſſary for an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

WE cannot do a greater injury to the chriſtian virtues than to ſet them forth as impracticable: This however is the artifice of ſome libertines, who to prevent women from applying themſelves thereto, tell them that it is a way full of thorns, altogether repugnant to the delicacy of their temper, and to that gaiety which is neceſſary to make them agreeable companions. But when they make the practice of virtue ſo auſtere and grievous, they do no leſs wrong in diverting women from it, than thoſe men did to the *Iſraëlites* who prevented them from going to the land of *Canaan*. As theſe reported that it was

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a land full of monſters, that devoured the inhabitants, ſo the falſe friends of virtue repreſent it as full of difficulties, and as what takes away all agreeableneſs and courage. But as theſe people curious to know the truth from experience, having ſent men expreſly to ſee whether the land was as bad as it was repreſented to them, found the contrary, and were well ſatisfied on ſeeing the fruit which the meſſengers brought back from thence*; we may ſay the ſame of chriſtian virtue, for if we examine without prejudice the great good it does the ſoul, we ſhall find that they who decry it, are either ignorant or libertines; and that its way is as ſweet and pleaſant as they have deſcribed it rugged and inacceſſible.

Let us examine the life and actionsof ſome illuſtrious lady, to ſee if chriſtian virtue hinders them from being agreeable to men of ſenſe, or whether by being devout they have been leſs courteous. But not to take a woman of mean birth or merit, let us caſt our eyes upon the princeſs *Clara Eugenia Iſabella* the *Infanta of Spain*, to ſee whether piety and diverſion may not be found together; to ſee, I ſay, whether probity and civility are imcompatible. *With reſpect to the piety of her court*, ſays cardinal *Bentivoglio*, *we ſhould undoubtedly take her palace for a monaſtery; but on the other hand, if we conſider the pomp and majeſty of it, there is*

* Numb. xiii. 14. Deut. i.

no

no one but would think it the moſt brillant and magnificent in the whole world. This court then was holy and delightful at the ſame time. Tho' this wiſe princeſs gave all the time that was requiſite to the exerciſe of chriſtian virtue, ſhe reſtrain'd not herſelf from employing ſome hours in recreation. She ſometimes went a hunting, and ſometimes took the trouble to let fly an hawk: She was no enemy to innocent exerciſes, but never profaned them by an extravagant equipage: She never affected the cavalier with hat and feather, or to be dreſſed like a goddeſs. She never diſguiſed herſelf for the ſake of any pleaſure: as ſhe was devout without auſterity, ſhe was gay without inſolence: She never appear'd frantic and giddy-headed; modeſty was inſeparable from all her actions. And as ſhe never thought there was any ſport or paſtime where it was permitted a woman to be fooliſh and extravagant; ſhe had not the leaſt air of a coquette, but was grave without being dull, and airy without being light.

This example, methinks, has weight in every circumſtance. She was a princeſs not far from us either in time or place: She was a foreigner, whom virtue alone and not favour makes us eſteem. Regarding well her life, we ſhall ſee how wrong it is to be aſhamed of chriſtian virtue; that in having the grace of God we may no leſs acquire the favour of man;

and

and that it is not impoſſible to find in the ſame perſon devotion and gaiety, modeſty and ſweetneſs, innocence and pleaſantneſs, agreeableneſs and virtue. In her alone the reſt of the ſex may ſee, that as moral virtue is abſolutely neceſſary for an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, chriſtian virtue is much more ſo; and that this not only gives a luſtre but alſo facility to the other. And indeed what is there in chriſtian virtue that can render moral virtue more grievous? Whatever may be ſaid it does not lead it aſtray but conducts it; it hinders it not but makes it more free; it renders it not mean but more bold; it augments both its luſtre and its ſtrength.

When moral virtue becomes chriſtian, it is made more noble by this divine adoption, more pure by this holy baptiſm, more fruitful by this ſacred marriage. The union of chriſtian virtue is not leſs advantageous to moral virtue, than that of the reaſonable ſoul when joined to the animal and ſenſitive. I have made this compariſon elſewhere, but it is ſo juſt and uſeful, that it well may be enlarg'd upon in this place, where it will give us much light with regard to the ſubject in hand. In many reſpects the alliance between theſe two ſorts of virtue reſembles that of the body and ſpirit, but I ſhall only touch upon the principal: As after the ſoul is infuſed we attribute even ſenſible effects to a ſpiritual cauſe; ſo after chriſtian virtue is joined with

with moral, the actions which were human become divine by reaſon of their principle. Virtue takes its birth from a moſt noble ſhoot, and as the actions of a ſenſitive ſoul are attributed to the reaſonable ſoul; ſo the effects of that virtue, which of itſelf is only natural, are attributed to the chriſtian which is heavenly, on account of the grace that renders it fruitful. Laſtly, as we do not ſay that the ſenſitive and animal ſouls are hinder'd by the rational, it would be very wrong to ſay that the moral virtues were hinder'd by the chriſtian. On the contrary, they are exalted from their natural ſtate by this means; they are aſſiſted and enobled.

Is it not a great advantage to moral virtue, which of itſelf is human and cannot produce other than natural effects, that it ſhould produce ſuch as are capable of eternity, when accompanied with chriſtian virtue? This takes nothing away from the other but ſterility and meanneſs; it makes it both more noble and more fruitful. The children of the bondwoman may aſpire to inheritance, when they are born between the hands of her miſtreſs; ſhe gives the children to God being aſſiſted by chriſtian virtue, as *Bilhah* gave them to *Jacob*, being owned and allowed of by *Rachel**. Moral virtue produceth effects worthy of heaven when accompanied with the chriſtian.

* Gen. xxx. 3—8.

Theſe

Theſe two virtues are as the two arms of the ſoul, but the chriſtian only appears as the right hand, when the moral is no more ſeen than the left hand of the holy bride *. They are as the two eyes; but tho' they ſee together, we attribute to them but one ſight. Laſtly, tho' theſe two virtues labour together, we give all the merit to the chriſtian, as to the eye that ſees more clearly, as to the hand that is the ſtronger, and as to the miſtreſs moſt beloved.

Moral virtue is as a wild tree, which brings forth no fruit but what is full of bitterneſs; it muſt be grafted with chriſtian virtue, without which the other is but an uſeleſs trunk. Whatever hath been ſaid of the virtue of the heathens, it never produced any fruit; their prudence degenerated into craft, and their fortitude into rage; they commonly exerciſed juſtice through fear, or temperance through vanity; their virtue had always ſomething in it rude and irkſom. If the women were chaſte, they were generally inſolent; if they had any ſentiments of goodneſs and honour, it was becauſe they were uſeful and agreeable. The greateſt part of them dealt by moral virtue as our hypocrites do by the chriſtian.

Let us now come to the certainty and aſſurance that chriſtian virtue communicates to moral, having ſeen in what manner it makes it

* Cant. ii. 4.

more

more bright and noble. It not only augments its beauty, but its knowledge; it not only renders it more precious, but more certain. Truly moral virtue walks not without fear and trembling; it can have no aſſurance in what it does without the help of chriſtian virtue. It loſes its way with all its rules, and regards not the end or final good but with eyes aſcaunt. The heathen philoſophers with all their knowledge were in danger of falling every moment, as the ancient pilots were always in danger of ſhipwreck: As theſe, having no other art than that of regarding ſome high mountain or ſome of the ſtars, were not ſo certain in their navigation, as men have been ſince they have found out the uſe of the compaſs; ſo the philoſophers, who had only natural knowledge of good and evil, and who had no other than human laws to direct them in the conduct of life, often erred with regard to virtue. But ſince chriſtian virtue hath been added to moral, the ſcience of navigation hath been more certain on this wide ſea of paſſions, where happen ſo many ſtorms and tempeſts. Charity ſhews us a pole-ſtar, which no clouds can hide from us. We ſee a ſovereign good openly as in the day, and wherein the ſight can never be deceiv'd; we have nothing to do but to obſerve this for our conduct in all human actions.

What if all the ancient philoſophy ſteer'd by the ſight of ſome ſtars? Surely they had no other

other light than that of cuſtom, human laws, and reaſon. And what are theſe but wandering ſtars and uncertain ſplendors? For not to ſpeak of cuſtom, which comes from too ſhameful a ſource to be certain, nor of human law which is generally full of obſcurity if not of ignorance, I ſhall only obſerve that the ancients were at a great loſs to explain what they meant by right reaſon. It could not be called right either by law or cuſtom, when all that cuſtom or law had in them of good was borrow'd from reaſon; how could the ſource itſelf have its origin from the ſtreams that flowed from it? How could the ſun borrow his light from the planets which receive their light from him? If the laws are not good but foraſmuch as they are conformable to reaſon; from whence had reaſon its rectitude, if I may ſo ſpeak concerning the law, but that it retook what it had before given, or rather that it is not right but by its own conduct. This then is the circle of the ancients. Hence reaſon without chriſtianity cannot but be fluctuating and uncertain; hence I ſay, it cannot be regulated but by chriſtianity, which gives it a ſuperior light, and ſtrengthens the works of nature by the aſſiſtance of grace.

The light of grace makes up for the eclipſes of reaſon; it prevents it from being vague and unſteady; it ſets it bounds and limits, which take not away its liberty but only its uncertainty,

which

which keeps it not from acting but from falling. Chriſtian virtue hinders not moral from walking, but from loſing its way. Inſtead of a glare which was often hid by the clouds of ignorance, or extinguiſh'd by the breath of the paſſions, it gives a light which always ſhines and which is a more certain guide than either the pole-ſtar or north-wind. This is a light which not only ſhines but heats. Chriſtian virtue not only guides the moral virtues, but animates and encourages them.

I do not wonder that the heathen women wanted fortitude and true perſeverance: They had not this divine aſſiſtance, they wanted this grace which ſtrengthens us, and which hath given ſuch firm reſolutions to young women, even in their tendereſt years, as not to be terrified at threatnings or torture. The heathens had not this holy unction which ſweetens all within; they had not this guide which both inſtructs and aſſiſts us. Grace is to us what *Hero*'s torch was to *Leander*, that not only gave him light, but animated him amidſt the waves, when he ſaw the tower where dwelt the object of his love, and the reward of all his pain. Without doubt we are not only enlightened, but encouraged by this light, which ſhews us our laſt end, and holds forth an immortal crown.

What

What did *Clelia* * propoſe in her noble actions, when being given in hoſtage to *Porſenna*, ſhe made her eſcape from him by ſwimming the river in her apparel; and then apprehending that her return might prejudice the *Roman* ſtate, ſhe repaſs'd the *Tiber*, and deliver'd herſelf again into the hands of her conqueror, having given two ſuch extraordinary proofs of her reſolution? What did *Teleſilla* propoſe, when of herſelf ſhe ſo inſpirited the women of *Argos* to defend their city againſt *Cleomenes*, that they drove him from the walls and made him raiſe the ſiege †? In ſhort, what recompence did other women among the heathens propoſe in doing a noble action? Surely they could aſpire to nothing more than a little vainglory; they expected ſome reputation in their own country, and the applauſe of the world. We have other ſort of prizes to expect from our labours. Without doubt we may ſay, that the commendable things they did were worth more than what they hoped for, and that their labour was more precious than their reward: Their probity was of greater value than their renown.

I know that among the *Ægyptians* God rewarded the compaſſion of many wiſe women, on

* A *Roman* lady. See the ſtory in *Plutarch*'s life of *Poplicola*. Livy lib. i.

† *Plutarch*, on the virtues of women.

account

account of their refuſing to obey the ordinances of a tyrant who intended to murder their innocent babes, and to ſlay all the male children of the *Hebrews* *.

I know that among the heathens he rewarded the chaſtity of the *Sibyls* with the gift of propheſy, and the continence of the *Veſtals* with the higheſt honours that could be given them; inſomuch that the emperors themſelves in the midſt of their triumphs, if they chanced to meet them in the ſtreets, ſhewed them a particular reſpect; that *Auguſtus* intruſted them with his will; that *Meſſalina* prayed them to ſpeak to her husband for her; and *Vitellius* † asked the favour of them to appeaſe the people.

Moral virtue then hath had ſome great rewards, but they were merely human; being founded only on a natural principle, it could expect but a temporal recompenſe. Charity muſt be joined to it as a ſupernatural principle: Without this, moral virtues are only ſervants to whom we owe ſome ſmall wages; but the chriſtian virtues are the legitimate daughters of a great prince, and the true heireſſes of his kingdom. He gives to theſe the dew of heaven, and to the other only the fat of the land:

* Exod. i. 17.

† The ninth emperor of *Rome*. *A. D.* 69. He reigned nine months.

Without

Without theſe the moral virtues are as pieces of gold unſtampt; if they have any value, it is not that of coin, but only of the metal: Not having the ſtamp of grace, they cannot be admitted to glory. Without theſe we can expect no other prize but what is from man, tho' we were ſo liberal as to give *all our goods to the poor*, tho' we had *faith enough to remove mountains*; nay tho' we endured martyrdom, which however is the greateſt teſtimony that we can give of our love and our courage in the ſervice of God *.

From hence we may judge, that moral virtue being alone cannot propoſe any recompence but what is unworthy of it; from hence we may learn, why it ſometimes ceaſeth to do well, and why we ſee it ſo often out of breath, when it propoſes to itſelf ſo ſlight an end as is worldly honour and the approbation of the people. The philoſophers themſelves and the moſt perfect among the *Gentiles* labour'd in vain: They advanc'd no further, not having charity to animate them, than the diſciples did that were fiſhing on the lake of *Genneſareth* † in the abſence of their maſter, and had been caſting their nets in vain all the night long; and having lived only according to the unaſſiſted conduct of reaſon, they might well ſay with the

* 1 Cor. xiii.
† Luke v. 5.

diſciples, *They had taken nothing*, and that all their pains were unprofitable.

A great writer ſomewhat myſteriouſly ſaid, that the virtue of chriſtians was more beautiful than the *Helen* of the *Greeks*; for if it is true, that the *Trojan* captains ſeeing the ſoldiers tired with ſo long a ſiege, could find no better means to rekindle their dying courage, than by ſhewing them the fair *Helen* for whom they fought, that they might be animated at the ſight of ſo great a beauty, and that the cauſe of their labour was alſo a remedy for their wearineſs; may we not ſay the ſame to thoſe, who have loſt their courage in any great deſign, or under ſome dire misfortune? Is it not enough to ſet before them chriſtian virtue, which is indeed more fair than *Helen*, having not only like her ſome natural graces, but even ſuch as are altogether divine, capable of warming the coldeſt heart, and giving courage to the moſt cowardly? If ſome heathens had reaſon to believe, that they could not but fall in love with moral virtue, were they to ſee her charms and graces; might not this be more truly ſaid of chriſtian virtue? May we not ſay, that if we could but diſcover her beauty, 'twould be impoſſible not to be enamour'd with her?

But ſhe hath far other charms to attract us. We have a more exalted notion than that of the

the heathens, who thought that virtue was to be beloved for herſelf alone. Tho' indeed ſhe hath many charms to make her amiable, if we view her naked as ſhe is, yet are we forbidden to ſtop here, nor are we allow'd to think that any production of men can be lovely for itſelf. Tho' virtue be fair, we muſt rather look upon the crown ſhe offers than upon her face, and eſteem her more for the reward ſhe gives than for her own worth. If there is any thing truly amiable in us, it is only a ſhoot of grace; we muſt not look upon it as a production of the ſoul but of God. It is a pearl, which is rather the daughter of heaven than of the ſea wherein it is formed; it is gold, which is rather the effect of the ſun than of the earth that produced it.

May we not judge from hence, after ſo great advantages of chriſtian above moral virtue, that this becomes more eaſy and practicable when it is accompanied with the other; and that there is no reaſon to think, that true devotion can be any hindrance to a perſon's appearing agreeable in converſation and expert in the affairs of the world. If all ages have wiſh'd for moral virtue in the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN of their days, how is it poſſible to form one in our days without deſigning her to have chriſtian virtue? Eſpecially ſince this renders the practice of the other more eaſy;

ſince it guides it back when it hath loſt its way, and encourages it when it is weary; ſince it ſtrengthens it with the hopes of glory, and enobles it by the means of grace: Laſtly, ſince it communicates ſo many advantages to it, muſt we not ſay that our virtue ought to be more lively than that of the *Gentiles*; and that chriſtian women ought to be of a better humour in the exerciſe of piety than were the heathens.

Let us ſtop our attention here a while, and, ſince we are come to that inward joy which virtue brings with it, let us judge of the wrong they do it, who think that they who practiſe it muſt needs be too melancholy for converſation; who think that it is not a quality for the court but for the cloiſter, and that it is too irkſom for the entertainment of company. They certainly do it much wrong, ſince it is ſo far from being at all troubleſom to company, that it removes all defects therefrom. And, as we have ſaid in a former diſcourſe, that in morality we muſt learn a truly courteous behaviour; we have much more reaſon to ſay the ſame of chriſtian virtue, as it is this which gives all the requiſite qualities to form an agreeable companion.

The better to judge of this, let us look on the picture which St. *Paul* hath drawn of charity*, which gives us every feature of chriſ-

* 1 Cor. xiii.

tian

tian virtue, if it be not the very ſame. It is not ambitious to pique itſelf upon every point of honour, or to be willing to exalt itſelf in the detriment of others: It is not mercenary, and is ſo far from paſſionately ſeeking what might belong to it that it recedes from what it has got, and affects not its own intereſt. It is not crafty or deceitful; there is nothing but freedom and candour in all its actions and all its words: But I am obliged here, in praiſing all its excellent qualities, to do as painters do in their pieces wherein they draw but two or three perſonages intire, and only a hand or a head of all the reſt. I have not room to ſpeak at large of all the advantages of charity; I can only name them inſtead of deſcribing them. She is patient, obliging, humble, compaſſionate, pleaſant; or, in a few words, ſhe is all that can be wiſh'd for, provided we wiſh for nothing more than what is lovely, juſt, and honourable.

And if theſe are the effects of chriſtian virtue, as no one can doubt but that they are, ought we not to conclude, that this is the true ſchool of civility and good-breeding? And, if it is requiſite for acquiring the grace of God, is it not alſo to gain the favour of man? Seem not theſe advan-

tages of charity to be the true advantages of a perſon very amiable in life? How then can it ever hinder us from having all the agreeableneſs that is neceſſary for converſation? And ſince this divine virtue gives us an inclination to oblige our neighbour, how ſhould it hinder us from pleaſing him? How can we think it, after all this, troubleſom or melancholy? There is no doubt but that ſuch as have acquired it as they ought, will always be in good humour. It is not more nattural for the ſun to give the day than for charity to give true chearfulneſs. It is its peculiar privilége; and if women would but in the leaſt conſider this truth, they would never ſuffer themſelves to be ſurpris'd by thoſe who endeavour to prove the contrary. Let them but have always in thought theſe excellent effects of chriſtian virtue, and all the artifices of libertines will never hinder them from putting it into practice.

But what need is there of ſo many arguments to perſuade that which is ſo conformable to their diſpoſition? I cannot here deny them the praiſes they deſerve, and which are given them by perſons under no ſuſpicion of flattery. Women are naturally inclined to charity; they cannot renounce it without renouncing at the ſame

ſame time their own inclination. I intend not here to relate what great and noble actions have been done by women when animated with this divine virtue: I ſhall not deſcribe at large the hiſtory of *Clotilda*, who by her prayers prevailed upon her husband *Clovis* to receive the ſacrament of baptiſm, and profeſs the chriſtian religion: Tho' this action intitles her to the moſt ample commendation, ſince ſhe hereby drove heatheniſm from *France*, and chriſtianity was eſtabliſh'd throughout the whole kingdom by the means of this holy princeſs. Nor is it neceſſary that I ſhould here ſpeak of the natural tenderneſs of women, which renders them the more ſuſceptible of the love of God: — Many inſtances likewiſe of this might be given from writers of indiſputable authority who have highly extolled the ſex on this account, and particularly that learned and good biſhop M. *de Sales*. But omitting theſe examples, and any further reaſoning, I ſhall conclude with obſerving, that however due theſe praiſes are to the ſex, women can have no title to them, unleſs they find themſelves hereby more inclined to this virtue, and are truly ſenſible

that

that their guilt will be ſo much the greater if they neglect the practice of it in their lives and converſations.

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